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Cover by Oliver Frey

FEATURES

MAELSTROM IN A TEACUP

signer of *Lords of Midnight* and *Doomdark's Revenge,* Mike Single I, lalks to CRASH about his murky past, *Dark Sceptre and Eye of the*

57 ADVENTURE TRAIL EXTRA

This month Detak Brewster brings a " adventure reviews, tips, maps, letters bumper supplement of

79 CRASH/US GOLD SPECIAL READERS OFFER Nine great US Gold hits on offer at lud:crous prices. Don't-miss out!

92 IS SMALL BEAUTIFUL?

Absent from the pages of CRASH for a year, ex-tipster Robin Candy returns and puts linger to key to debate the state of the games software

128TAMARA KNIGHT

130 VIDEO REVIEWS

We try an experiment – vids for hire get an airing in CHASH pages (see Editorial).

REGULARS

EDITORIAL

agnother gnu for CRASH Towers

10 NEWS

Snippets of Immediacy from all over the country, including the story of the overused Kanix joystick.

12 FEAR AND LOATHING

36 LLOYD MANGRAM'S FORUM

LLOYD MANGRAM'S PLAYING TIPS

Is nothing sacred from this man! Not as big as last month's extra supplement, but still seven pages of useful hints, tips, maps – including Head Over Heels and Sabotour.

74 PBM MAILBOX

An expanded Brendan Kavanagh updates the squatron and aids the Post Office self-stamps.

B2 COMPETITION WINNERS

PHILIPPA IRVING'S FRONTLINE

The doughty, derring-do strategist takes on the Bismarck and a horder of Zulu warriors.

97 TECH NICHE

After his illness, Simon Goodwin returns in force, but Jon Bates gets a Midi word in too.

118 CRASH READERS' CHARTS

122 PREVIEWS

DO IT YOURSELF

GREAT THRONES OF FIRE!

day out at the London Dungeon is yours if you win this Melbourne House competition

POGO A GO-GO

Nith Gremlin Graphics and win a pogo stick, plus Thing Bounces Back

SHAKEN NOT STIRRED

ark are offering tickets to an exclusive preview of the new JAMES

FERGUSON ADVENTURE QUIZ Win the last in our series of Ferguson Monitors, Interfaces and a Spec-

96 SHADOWS OF MORDOR

Win a silver plated goblet, games and posters. More goodies from Mel-bourne Housa.

120 PERFECT TIMING

is yours if you win a special watch in US Gold's Metracross comp, and there are copies host of the great new game up for grabs tool.

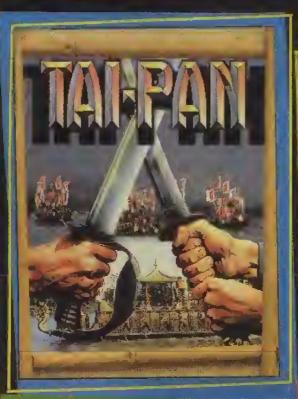






The next issue of CRASH is also a special one — we're giving away a free copy of the IPC comic OINK which has been specially commissioned for CRASH. Don't miss your copy—it goes on sale from 25 June. Offending non-buyers will be rooted out, grunted at and very probably cured and sold as prime back with the rind on.







rom the author of SHOGUN

James Clavell, comes TA!

PAN and a terrific new
game packed with action and
stronging graphics. TAI PAN is the
exciting story of a man and are
island. Become flick Struan = a



isiand, become birk struan — a pirate, a smuggler, a manipulator of men achieving riches beyond imagination. Enter a world of blood, sin, treachery, conspirary and murder — a game of Grand entertainment! ultrars of No. 1 Blockbuster,
Batman, Jon Ritman and Bernie
Drummond present 'Head over
Heals' — Hill My name's Mr. Head. Some
say I'm the one with the brains but I don't
think my I'll footed friend would agree.
I'm a real sharp shooter, but without my
pat Mr. Heels I'd get nowhere last.



slow I I can jump like a first and even glida but Heels is the Beley
Thompson of the two of us — he's FAST! Together, if we can find each
other, we really do make an awasome twosome, and that's the only w
we can overcome the emperor Blacktooth.

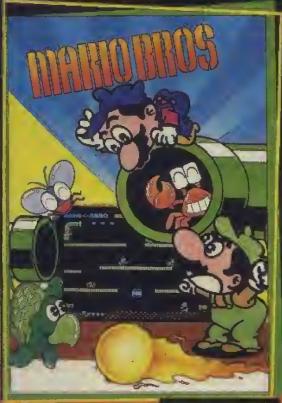
IS PLAYING T

Screen shots taken from various correputer formats



Ocean Software Limited · 6 Central Street · Manchester M2 5NS · Telephone:



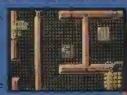


ow hot from the arcades comes Nintendo's Mario Bros for your home computers featuring Fireballs, Sidestepper, Fighterfly and of course — Mario and Luigi! Flip those peets and kirk 'em off the



pipes, but don't lose your looking on those s'ipperly rioors Play as a team or against each other; elther way you're in for a scream with Mario and Luigi — the MARIO BROS. NOW A ALABLE OR YOUR SPECTRUM and AMSTRAD

Trock on the Mutants knowing I was larmed to the feeth with missiles, miner to receive and midre. I could even choose where I wanted to flight? How quiet lose? How DID I tope? The never seen anything level. They carboat me in drives, in swiding gases, in forms spinning a deadly got server and they were more to come. I know now that one form of Mutantiwillinous which a well planned pattern of raines. It's just a well planned pattern of raines. It's just a well planned pattern of raines.



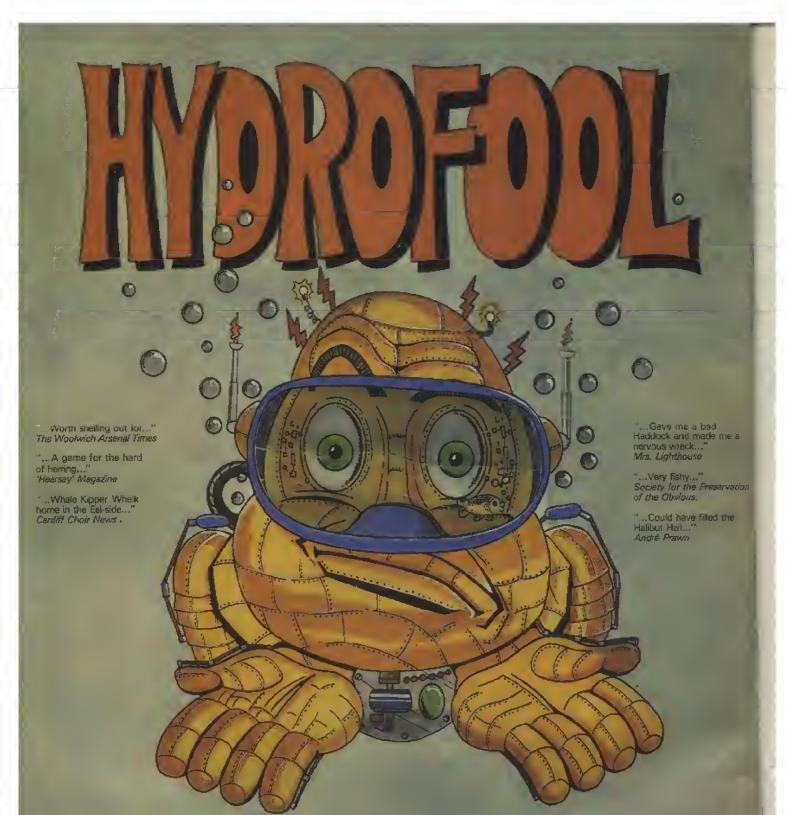
novel permise partient of primes, it is just the beginning — out threat band throat make veop or or 1915 (58 be a of fleen all "An essential purchase — mbs it and you're missing something special" — Zzap

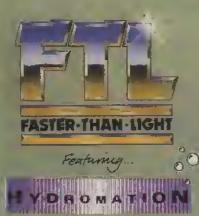
HE WINNERS!

20m

SPECTRUM £7:95 COMMODORE £8:95 AMSTRAD £8:95 - EACH

: 061 832 6633 · Telex: 669977 OCEANS G · Facsimile: 061 834 0650





SPECTRUM £7.95 AMSTRAD £8.95

AVAILABLE MID-MAY

Fresh from his dismal triumph on Knutz Folly, Sweevo is thrust onto the watery world of **DEATHBOWL**, a planet which, for no good reason, has been converted into a gigantic aquarium.

Will Sweevo succeed in his mysterious mission — or will the Great Bowl-Keeper pull the plug on him?

HYDROFOOL is a fast, 3-D, seek, chase, puzzle and laugh game, featuring the fabulous but irrelevant HYDROMATION.







CLOSES

A YEAR and two months ago, a brave experiment was formulated. The concept had been hovering for longer, but in the small Cornish fishing village of Mousehole (pronounced Mow-zai), the directors of Newsfield, who happened to be taking a working break there, committed the company to launching an entirely new type of youth magazine.

nappened to be taking a working break there, committed the company to launching an entirely new type of youth magazine. Fed up with the accepted pap of existing periodicals, Newsfield tried to devise a magazine which would encompass every aspect of life, involve the readership as much as the computer titles did and present itself as a long and good read every month. From its plethora of early working titles, it became known as LM.

Sadly, the experiment has ended. The fifth issue of LM has not been printed. The magazine has closed and its talented and devoted editorial team have gone their separate ways. I said 'ended'—LM did not fail, but market forces prevailed against it. Advertising agencies and their clients failed to see the impact LM was going to have on the traditionally fractured and difficult 'youth' market. The magazine was referred to as 'too widely targetted'; translated, that means it covered so much ground in its editorial that advertisers couldn't see who was going to buy it. The belief that people aged between 15 and 25 require magazines of a narrow scope and preferably with very few words which skate right over the top of a subject, hardly touching its depths at all, continues.

at all, continues.

Advertisers thought LM would confuse potential readers and so no-one would buy it. They were

wrong. Taking into account the increases in monthly sales from the first issue, LM Issue Five would have enjoyed sales probably in excess of 60,000, and I'm confident it was easily set to top 100,000 before the end of the year.

LM had to close because
Newsfield is not a huge
conglomerate with limitiess funds,
and the company could not wait
any longer for advertising revenue
to catch up with LM's monthly
costs. As I write, there is still a
hope that another publisher will
buy the title. But whatever
happens, the spirit of LM will not
die. It lit a flame under the precious
notions of youth publishing, and
pointed a finger in a different, more
vital direction. Hopefully someone
will learn a few lessons from it, so
that we may look forward to
magazines with guts in their bellies
instead of guff.

SOMETHING DIFFERENT IN CRASH

Not all of LM has disappeared. CRASH has inherited its sub-editor Barnaby Page. Shuffles and reshuffles seem all the vogue at the moment; Ciarán Brennan, introduced last month, moves over to ZZAP! in an attempt to improve its team's spelling and grammar (now that should be something to seel). Barnaby takes the hot seat at CRASH, and has already contributed heavily to this issue. Readers of LM will be familiar with his style – despite his extreme youth, he's the one who can tell you the difference between an ardvaark and a bear-ant. And he's the one I always go to when I get confused between 'comitted' and 'committed'.

get confused between confitted and 'committed'.

We've also fried an experiment in this CRASH – you can find it on page 130 – Video Reviews. The argument goes as follows: CRASH readers live all over the country, not always near a cinema and – whether they do or not – almost certainly hire videos regularly. Films (videos) may not be directly anything to do with computer games (though often enough there are tie-ins and even films featuring computers), but they're a standard part of entertainment, and we thought CRASH readers would like the regular games reviewers' comments on the latest hire shop releases.

If we've got that wrong, no doubt you will tell us. If the ideas proves popular, then we'll rapidly expand the page to a small section, though no more than four pages at most.



Moving from LM to CRASH, Barnaby Page becomes the new sub-editor.





UNWELL

CRASH seems to have suffered from people being unwell of late. Tech Niche fans, however, will be pleased to see Simon Goodwin recovered, back on form and back on the technical pages again. Oliver Frey, unfortunately, has had a couple of weeks feeling poorly, and as a result there sno Terminal Man this issue. But he, too, is back at work again, busily catching up on those colourful pages ready for next month.

MORE COLOUR

I hope you enjoy this packed issue of CRASH as much as we've enjoyed putting it together. For the first time, every review in the magazine has colour screen shots (unless I've been misled by someone in 'art'. It rather depends on how the software comes in during the production period - this month was a bit of a struggle with late arrivals, last month was a doddle-as to whether we can get every review in full colour; but we shall always try our best. Look out for the Special

Readers' Offer on page 79, which has some of the best of US Gold's past hits as its attraction. Last month's Gremlin Graphics Offer is going great guns. Over the next few issues, we'll be lining up some more amazing deals for those older games you may have missed. At CRASH we're leaping and bounding ahead.

ROGER KEAN

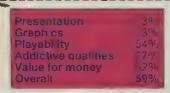
GAMES REVIEW INDEX

- 16 Army Moves Ocean
- 114 Barbarian Palace 87 Bismarck PSS
- 64 Book of the Dead Essential
- 19 Bubbler Ultimate
- 21 Chronos Mastertronic 24 Cosmic Shock Absorber
- 116 Dogfight 2187 Starlight 61 Don't Panic Dented
- 114 Enterprise Melbourne
- 24 Express Raider US Gold 112 Final Matrix (The) Gremlin Graphics
- 20 Ghost Hunters Code Masters
- 62 Golden Mask Compass
- 34 Gunrunner Hewson 110 Howard the Duck
- Activi sion 14 Hydrofool FTL
- 65 Inheritance Infogrames

- 32 Indoor Sports Advance 22 Island Caper (Spy v Spy II)
- Databyte 105 Jackle and Wide Buildog 110 Livingstone (I Presume)
- Alligata 26 Mario Brothers Ocean
- 104 Mr Weems Piranha 33 Octagon Budgie
- 62 Operation Stallion Wrightchoice
- Parabola Firebird
- 58 Pawn (The) Rainbird
- 111 Red Scorpion Quicksilva 103 Saboteur II Durell
- 59 Shadows of Mordor Mel-
- bourne Hous 61 Shipwreck/Castle Eerie
- 31 Star Runner Code Masters 26 Strike M.A.D.
- 25 Super Robin Hood Code
- 31 Tuba Ruba Firebird 88 Zulu Wars CCS

Erratum Nemesis

Sorry! Due to an odd problem that occurred during film planning, last month's review of Konami's Nemesis lost its ratings. Here we, provide you with a cut out and paste replacement box...





JUST after we'd sent this month's PBM section (starting on page 74) to the printers, the soccer game Kick-About changed its address You can now write to Kick-Aboul at: 53 Swann Way, Broadbridge Heath, West Sussex



A NEVER TO BE REPEATED OPPORTUNITY!

Collect the specially commissioned 16 page FREE issue of this piggy cult comic from IPC to whet your appetite for the new CRL computer game. The snouty team of comic strip wizzkids are even now hard at work preparing comic strip frames of swinish scintillating sibilance, rooting through their ideas drawer for nuggety truffles to discover in your next CRASH. You won't be able to buy this one on the news stands - it's ONLY in CRASH, for CRASH Readers!

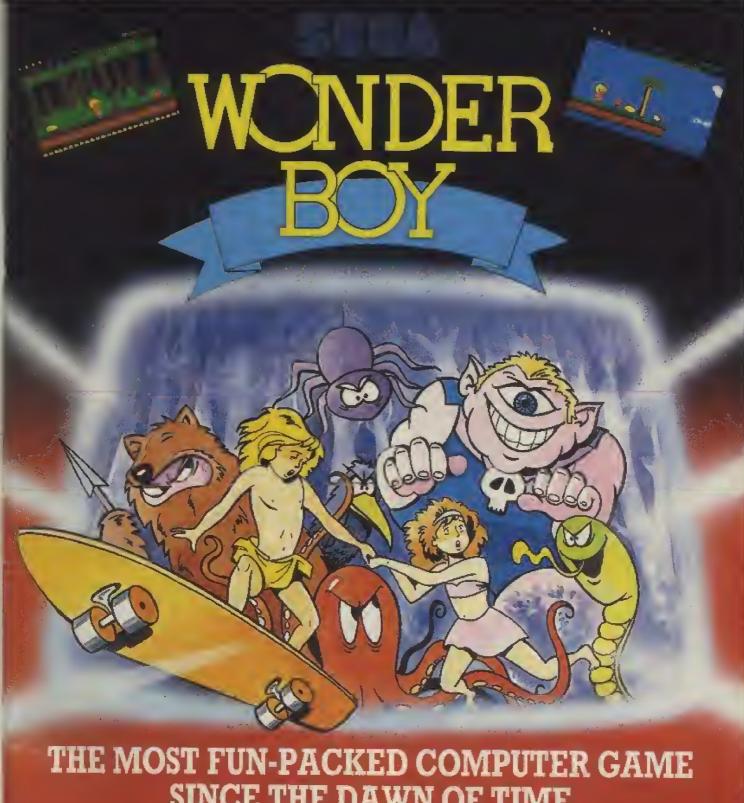
THE ACADEMICIAN TUNNELS OUT

PETE COOKE, programmer of Tau Ceti and Academy talks about his new tunneling game, Micronaut One, how it relates to his earlier hits, why juggernauts are hard to drive, being a streetwise upstart, why computer games are more fun than teaching maths, and why he switched to Nexus.

And we reveal who won the CRASH Mapping competition, how the DOMARK Design a Game entrants have fared, ON THE SCREEN returns, plus loads more new reviews, previews and other goodies we haven't even thought of yet ... but we will!

ADVERTISERS INDEX

ADVENIOUS NICE			
Activision	9	Firebird	30, 77, 80
Алдо	127	E & J	37
Ariolasoft 39	, 55	FTL	6
Atari 28, 29	35	Hewson	13
CRASH Back Numbers	106	Imagine	2, 108, 109
CRASH Subscription Offer		Lerm	43
	106	Microprose	17
CRASH Maif Order	126	Ocean	4, 5, 42
CRASH T-Shirts/Binders	122	Palace	27
Databyte	113	Piranha	117
Electronic Services	43	RAM	23
Elite	132	Software Projects	101
Gifsoft	65	US Gold	40, 41, 131
Gremlin Graphics 91,	121	Verran	86
	4, 95	Video Vault	18, 80
Melbourne House	56	Virgin	102



SINCE THE DAWN OF TIME

Wonderboy is here for your home computer! From the arcade original by Sega

Wonderboy is a kid with a quest to reach his girlfriend across treacherous landscapes and rescue her from the evil King. Burning bonfires, furthling boulders, poisonous snakes, killer frogs and murderous blue midgets can all make for a short trip—but our hero can break. In giant eggs to collect a stone axe, a guardian angel and other valuables to help him on his mission. A skateboard speeds up his progress and picking fruit provides bonus points if you're careful

A fast, fun-packed game of skill and timing.

NTERTAINMENT SOFTWAR

TRAD CPC DISK 11499. COMMODORE 64/128 CASSETTE 1299. I DISK 11499. ZX SPECTRIM 4816/1287-41999.





KILLER INSECT HORROR

AMAUROTE received a CRASH Smash and a rave 128K review last month - but now there are some problems with the Masterbronic budget game, and with their earlier

Mastertronic were running very late with their Amaurote schedule, so rather than keep everyone warting another few weeks they decided to release a 48K-only version – without the flashy music,

stills and animated sequence.
They then remastered and released the 48K Amaurote with 128K enhancements. The same thing happened with Zub.

So there are two versions of

REACH OUT and touch

something with Educated Archie, announced as the 'ultimate serious tey' for home computers— a robotic arm which picks up

objects and uses tools, controlled

from a Spectrum. He (it?) can stretch his arm out 350 mm (just over a foot) and hold

objects weighing up to 250 g (about half a pound).
Developed by Oxbridge
Technology in Milton Keynes,

Buckinghamshire, Archie takes

just two hours to assemble, and

Amaurote and Zub Boating

around in computer shaps.
But if you're a 128/+2 owner who bought a copy of the 48K
Amaurate or Zub on the strength of our reviews only to find that the great graphics and some goodles weren't there, you didn't waste

To get a proper 128K copy of Amaurote or Zub just send your 48K version back to Mastertronic with a covering note, and they'll send you a wizzo new one for no extra charge. Write to Jeff Heath at

Mastertronic Ltd. 8-10 Paul Street, London EC2A 4JH.

the minirobot's software will quickly teach you how to use him Archie is available for most

personal computers; the £220 price includes an appropriate software package. At the moment he's on sale only from the manufacturers, though an

Oxbridge Technology spokesman

says Archie will be in at least three high-street chains by the autumn. But if you can't last the summer without Archie stirring a cool dink, contact Oxbridge Technology Limited at Breckland Saxon.

RO RO RO YOUR BOT

GAMES MAGS CLOSE

COMPUTER GAMER magazine has closed—just four months after Argus Specialist Publications tried

to save the monthly with a major relaunch, making it a lighter read. But the improvements weren't enough to keep the title alive, said Argus Circulation Director

Raymond Lewis. It was selling about 28,000 copies a month, with "very few" subscribers.

Also gone to the great back-issues office in the sky is Argus's ZX Monthly, which had suffered massive circulation damage this year. Through 1986 it was selling an average of 28,652 copies each month (half of them overseas) — but by this spring the figure had dropped to under 20,000, Lewis revealed.

In 1986 CRASH sold an average of 96,327 copies each month.

The June Issues of both Argus magazines will be the last. And the company has no plans to sell them off or incorporate them into other titles, according to Lewis

TOP STOP GADGET



THINK **AGAIN**

FIREBIRD'S £1.99 Silver range recently bought the rights to some 40 oldies-but-goodies by 40 ordes-bit-goodes by Activision, New they've added Ariolasoft's puzzle game Think! to their list of cheap classics – it should be on the streets already. Think!, from Tigress Designs, received 82% Overall in the April

UNDER BOUNDS

BOUNDER is a year old this

BOUNDER is a year old this month, and to celebrate the obbbouncy tennis-bobball hero's bobborthday Gremlin will release his next adventure, Re-Bounder, in July for £7.99.

It'll be much like the original Bounder (a CRASH Smash in June 1986) — Bounder's two programmers. Cotin 'Fungus' has ay and Chris Keny, are doing the conversion from the 064.

In Re-Bounder the player negotiates 18 peritous levels of impenetrable waits, collapsible floors and spiky tennis-ball-bursting objects.

But this time Bounder is equipped with armour plating and a weapon (which still hasn't been chosen by Grendlin's armoury!)—so there'll be plenty of alienblasting needed to get through and obliterate the sentinel at the end of each level.



OCEAN ON THE MARCH

OCEAN has commissioned a game of the gritty Vietnam film Platoon, which zoomed to the top of the box-office charts when it

was released last month. The *Platoon* game should appear this autumn on the three

main formats.
Ocean's Gary Bracey couldn't reveal who the programmers are butsaid that it's not being done inhouse - and that the names will have 'a familiar ring'. The world

Describing the difficult Describing the difficult Platoon project, Ocean Chairman David Ward explained: 'Platoon doesn't contain the political rhetoric of Rambo, yet it's been a tremendous success. It's an honest film, and we intend to treat it sympathetically.

'in computer enterteinment the victorious soldier is usually the hero,' he said, 'but in this film the heroes are much more complex. So a lot of work and thought is required to create a stimulating



A WAG TOO FAR?

THE MAD SCIENTISTS at Konix continue their cruel and unusual waggling of the company's Speed King joystick in an attempt to find out just how long you can shake it all about, our Waggling Editor

The joystick, which declined to be named, has been waggled by an electric drill since early March at 450 wpm (waggles per minute), 12 hours a day, six days a week, CRASH catculates that by the time this is published the Speed King will have waggled some 20 million waggles a life transmiss. waggles – if it survives. Someone stands to win £100

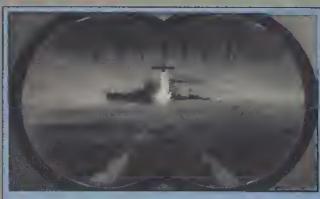
The Konix Speed King Joystick caught in a waggling moment

when the joystick waggles its last; a couple of hundred entered a Konix competition (now closed) to guess its endurance, as reported by Hunter S Minson in the Chnstmas CRASH. The highest guess was 11 years, says Konix waggling spokesman Michael

The Speed King is connected to an Amstrad 6128K computer, where a progrem by Christian Urguhart will monitor its dying shudders. Urguhart says the 450 wpm rate is enough to qualify from the first round in the 100 metres in Daley Thompson's Decathlon, which he coauthored.

Does that make Konix a

Does that make Konix a corporate champion? Is the amateur spirit of the Olympics irretrievably lost? It's hard to know where Konix based in Tredgaga. Gwent) will stop – the joystick is 'still waggling persistently', says Baxter, and they're aiming for the Guinness Book Of World Records.



ONE OF OUR SUBS IS BANNED

WEST GERMANY has banned MicroProse's Silent Service - for being 'too realistic'.

The Second World War sub simulation, known in Germany as Das U Boot, was placed on the Youth Dangerous Publications List, set up to protect young Germans from porn and material which might encourage violence, Now the game (reviewed in FRONTLINE, CRASH March 1987) is only available to West Germans

from controlled outlets such as

sex shops.

But MicroProse plans to appeal the decision, and take the West German authorities to court if necessary, Said the American software house's President, Bill Stealey, 'They should take a second look at legislation which wrongly lumps together computer software with nemographic software with pernographic

'Driving sophisticated software into the backstreets will have a damaging effection Germany's own burgeoning industry.'

While Stealey seeks to save Das U Boot, staff at MicroProse's European headquatters in

European headquarters in Tetbury, Gloucestershire can wait and see whether the furore will push up UK sales of Silent Service, already one of their top sallers – the German incident even got them the front page of The Independent



THE LEATING

WARIS

Nobody said it was going to be easy, but did it have be as bad as this? The first victim of ligging is sobriety, and Minson joins the other grunts in a fight for survival as publications explode about his ears.

This has been a tough month, it's not that there's been a shortage of launches – far from it. But mighty forces are shifting, the walls are closing in and the sticky brown rain is coming.

is coming. But let's start our weirdness at the American Embassy. I've only visited this imposing bunkhouse once before, and that was to obtain a visa. That time the

obtain a visa. That time the marines all but strip-searched me before letting me into the building. This time I wasn't taking any chances. The night before I lawn-mowered my hair, giving myself the sort of cut that only a Gi could love. Then I donned mirror shades, a Hawaiian shirt, and a "Vote For Nixon" badge to show that I wasn't one of those commis pinkos who'd kick a president fust. who'd kick a president just because he was a bigger bugger than most.

As I approached the building I left a strong desire to start chant-ing 'Hell no, we won't go', and burn my draft card – sorry invite – but Microprose had made it quite clear that there was no admission without that square of card, so I bit

Having run the gauntlet of metal detectors and sworn that I have never been a communist or related to Gadaffi, I was allowed into the reception. And who was the first person I saw? If it wasn't my old (and I use the word advisedly)

(and I use the word advisedly) nemesis, Kremlin, a well known Commie(dore 64 user).
Didn't this make a mockery of all that stringent security? Not at all. From the number of journalists nobody had ever seen before, all of whom had matching crew cuts and wore matching, light-weight grey suits (with equally matching bulges under their left armpits), I guessed that they'd got everything

under control.

Yes, it seems that even the CtA loves Microprose programs, unlike the German government. That noble institution has put restrictions on titles such as the submarine simulation Silent Services. vice, in case the militaristic aspects corrupt their youth, I can just see a teenage gang cruising down the Bonn high street in a submarine, torpedoing old women

submarine, torpedoing old women and children.
Of course Microprose Isn't warmongering. But Microprose Is Major 'Wild Bill' Stealey, Fighter Pilot Supreme and Chief Advisor, Joint Chiefs of Staff, as his 'Wild Bill card' proudly proclaims. And what do you expect of a pedigree like that — a lesson in lying down and letting the commies march all overus? No siree! You can almost hear the sneer when the Microprose promo video turns from the joys of trashing the towel heads in joys of trashing the towel heads in F-15 Strike Eagle to the likes of Solo Flight, a pacifist prop plane formummy's boys who like to play with themselves. By the time we'd reached Conflict in Vietnam I was so keyed up that I was ready to enrol and nook those gooks.

But an army marches on its stomach, and I can highly recommend the American Embassy any time you're feeling peckish. Burgers, hot dogs, ribs, and great pecan pie, plus Bud to guzzle of course. Beats MacDonalds any day. oys of trashing the towel heads in

day.
After my visit to the helm of the aircraft carrier USS Great Britsin, the Rock Garden was something of a step down. Actually there's a lot of steps down into that cellar, better known for sweaty crowds on Saturday Nights. But on a Friday lunchtime, the only starlight to be found was the software label



... and the sparkle in the eyes of the unbelievably wonderful **Amanda Barry**

Security was, if anything, even tighter than at the American Embessy. I'm used to bouncers when I go to gigs, but heavies at a press launch is a different story altogether. Combined with the opressive atmosphere of an impending storm outside and the prospect of Rock Garden culsine, I did what any self respecting journalist would do . . I freaked!

Staying sane just long enough to log Starfire nouveau shoot 'emup Red LED, which involves fast blasting to win spaces on a battle grid spread over a multi-level landscape, I did a quick survey of the tighter than at the American

scape, I did a quick survey of the

grid spread over a multi-fevellandscape, I did a quick survey of the
throng. Almost immediately my
eyes alighted on the eligible
Michael Baxter and his divine
partner in PR, Sarah Donovan.
'Save me', I screamed. 'Don't
you know that they're closing in?
We need to take your car, load up
with an expensive sound system
and enough recreational aids to
keep us unhinged, then drive out
to the Fens at 125 mph, with the
hood down and me standing
naked shouting at the elements!'
Would you believe that Baxter
just giggled? I wouldn't take no for
an answer though. Pausing only to
pick up my super Starlight goodle
bag, I slipped outside. But Baxtie
and Donovan were slippier than I
was and had given me the slip.
Never mind, I did learn sever alvery
interesting facts about the eligible interesting facts about the eligible



one, and you'll be reading more about them next month unless a meal is forthcoming in the interim (that's what you said about Maria Whittaker – Ed).

By now the fear was upon me and it was only the calming presence of Clare Edgeley that kept me together endough to drop in on.

me together enough to drop in on Rainblrd's do at The Cheshire Cheese, off Fleet Street. Apart from the fact that 128

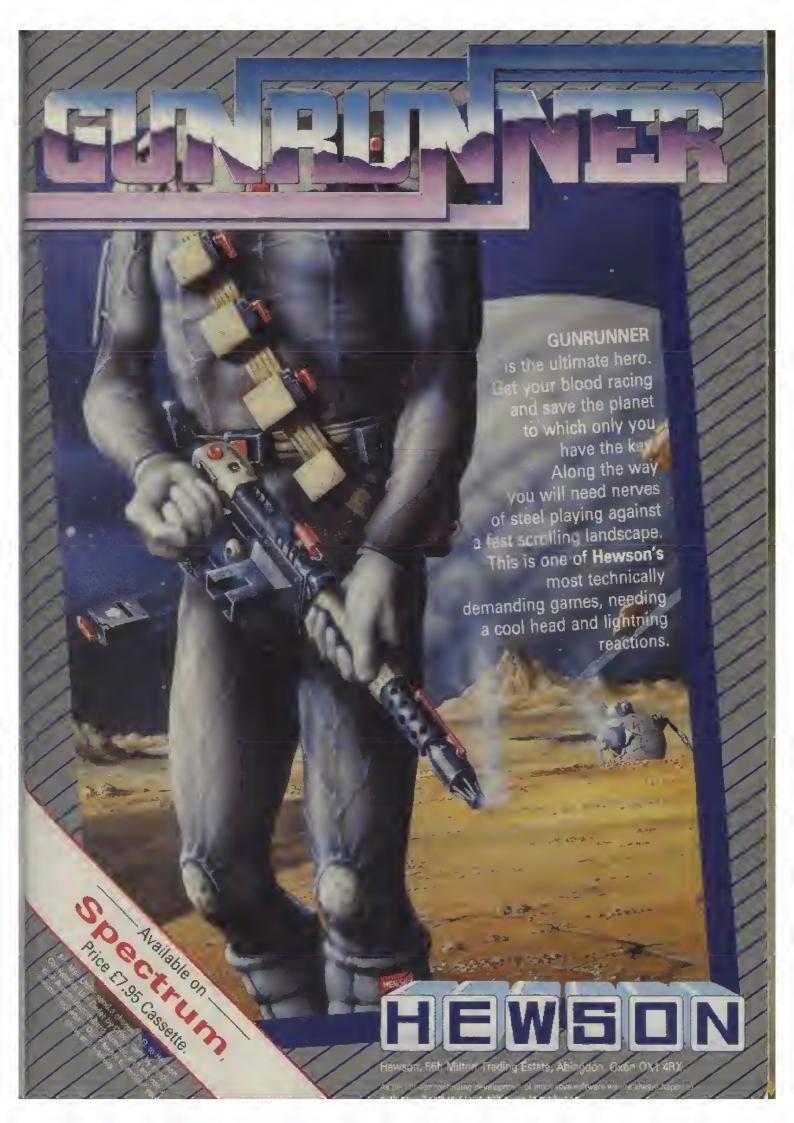
owners can now enjoy the king of adventures, *The Pawn*, there was nothing imminent for Spectrum users. This was a birthday party for users. This was a birthday party for lis sequel, Gulld of Thieves, which is first appearing on all those yup-pie machines like the Amiga and ST. Everything comes to those that wait though, particularly with the +3 on the horizon.

Everything comes to Minson too. As I stumbled out of this thieves den, Clare pressed a bag labelled 'Swag' into my sticky hands. Seems that she'd just done

over a wine merchants and wanted me to help dispose of the evidence – a very pleasant white, Cheers! But making a beast of myself hasn't been enough to keep away the harshness of reality. It's time to get serious. This month has seen the departure of three magazines. the departure of three magazines. Two were computer titles, ZX computing and Computer Gamer. It's always sad – and somewhat worrying – when the markel starts to shrink. There were some damn good people on those mags too. more faces who've gone missing

in action.

The other tragedy lies closer to home. As you'll have read elsewhere in this issue, LM is a victim of the accountants and other. financial problems that make a publishers life so hard. Speaking as both a contributor and a reader, I'm sorry to see it go. It had a fine, dedicated team working to produce an intelligent, perceptive and often controversial publication. And perhaps that was the problem. Maybe it was just too hard hitting. Maybe it was ahead of its time. Whatever the the reason, it



H · Y · D · R · C ·

bout a year, and a half ago a Self Willed Extreme Envi-ronment Organism (SWEEVO to his friends) was sent to a mysterious world, Knutz Fully. Once there Sweeve had to do a Shot of tidying up and capture several cuteWidgers. Now, after much effort and bumbling, Sweevo has returned with a vengeance and,

returned with a vengeance and, well, a wimper or two.
The kindly old Robe-Master gnashed his metallic teeth and roaring at Sweeve said, 'I didn't expect you back so soon... so, go and clean out the Deathbowl and don't return until you've finished doing that.'
Sweezer being the warv soul

thished doing that."

Sweevo, being the wary soul that he is, picked up his dopy of Galactic Aquarist (essential reading for all intergalactic cleaners of deadly bowls) and read:

The gigantic aquarium known as

CRITICISM

" Sweevo's World was a very original game that had a quality very hard to define, and one that hasn't quite and one that hasn't quite been reproduced since. Bearing this in mind I was annoyed to hear that FTL were doing a follow up. hydrofool has turned out to be a Sweevo's clone (the similarities are too numerous to mention) that's playous to mention) their splay-able and compelling, but not the step (orward that its 'parent' was. The puzzles take a while to solve but aren't frighteningly hard once you've learnt the basic layout of the playing area. The graphics leave lit-tle to be desired, some tle to be desired, some character definition is excellent, and the subaqua effect works convincingly well. Sound, too, is more than adequate (except for the re-run of the Sweevo's World title tune), but the 128K tune and effects are foreunging. This effects are far superior. This should provide plenty of puzzle solving and map-ping fun for all. Recom-mended."

BEN

Producer: FTL Retail Price: £7.95 Authors: Roy Carter and Greg Follis

the Deathbowl is now so heavily

the Dearnbown is flow so, heavily polluted that the only remedy is to icompletely drain it by pulling out each of the four plugs. So there you have it. Sweeve with diving gear in tow has been abandoned on another strange world with only his wits for tack of them). to protect him from the plethors of weird and wenderful creatures, none of whom are too fond of alien

CRITICISM

"Essentially Hydrofool's concept is a rehash of the Hydrofool's old Sweevo's game, new names and different baddies perhaps, but vary similar – even the same Sweeve's tune. However, there are some completely new graphics. The main characters are superbly animated end drawn with a great amount of detail. I found Hydrotool much harder to play than its pre-decessor, although the problems are fairly logically set out. The backgrounds create a good feeling of depth with the creatures adding to the strong atmosphere. If you've seen Sweevo's then don't expect much different - still a great game though." PAUL

habital. Each of the plugs must be

habitat. Each of the plugs must be pulled in the correct order else an maccessible level is created. And to pull a plug several puzzles must be solved by moving specific objects to particular places.

Unfortunately these objects are often guarded by Deathbowl's denizens, or they may even be a part of a particularly despicable hasty. Luckily, though, there are weapons to be found in abundance for the destruction of these creatures but watch the ammo level, it's very limited.

level, it's very limited. Deathbowl is constructed on sav padinterning levels in a similar training to Sweeve's World. Whirlpools are used to travel downwards to the next level and bubbles for upward movement.
The game itself is presented in 3D isometric views, using two, but varying, colours for the caverns.

ying, colours for the caverns. Sweevo has several lives, one being lost each time his Rustomter reaches maximum. Such occurs rapidly as soon as Sweevo makes contect with water (silly fool forgot his wet suit), but if it starts to get dangerously high, rusting can be temporarily haited by linding the oil cans that pollute Deathbowl.

CRITICISM

Some game formats can stand cloning by their creators, and what made Sweevo's World was the content more than the look which is saying a lot because it looked great. So Hydrofool survives less for its originality than because it's still a highly enjoyable romp, packed with loads of puzzies, a need for dexterity and plenty of atmos-phere - the first time you phere – the first time you see a sea serpent pop up from the floor ranks as quite a shock. The feel of the game relies heavily on the high quality graphics – Sweevo really does seem to be swimming under water. With the large number of screens, and the Intricately woven Greg Fol-lis puzzies, Hydrofool should hold its appeal for quite some time.

Touching guardians is none too healthy either, so once armed — shoot to kill!

The game is spread out over more than 200 caverns, and the 128K version boasts an even bigger map as well as a Rob Hubbard score, a cartographer's delight, no less. Hydroloid is some mean beast to beat, the pregrammers estimate a game time of about four hours for expenenced cleaners

COMMENTS

Control keys: Q W E R T/ YUIOP up left/up right, ASDFG/HJK Ldown left/ down right, Space to fire Joystick: Kempston, Interface Use of colour: monochromatic playing area Graphics: superb definition and animation Sound: good tune and spot FX, better still on 128 Skill levels; one Screens: over 200 General rating: A first class sequel, entertaining, addictive and highly amusing.

Presentation	84%
Graphics	91%
Playability	85%
Addictive Qualities	90%
Value for Money	83%
Overall	90%



PARABOLA

Producer: Firebird Retail Price: £1.99 Author: J Bond

Bouncing Bruce, the well-known droid on a spring, is caught in a multisectored cosmic energy grid—and he wants

Cosmic energy grid—and the wards to escape from every level.

Surrounded by the black oblivion of space, each sector is composed of blocks, set at different heights and forming a grid. Bruce can move up to three blocks at a time, in straight lines (he can't move diagonally, though). Con-trolling Bruce, you can decide the height of each bounce and move him up to higher levels of the grid. Some grid squares contain

MIKE

" I'm Impressed. Parabola, though simple, is an addictive little game; my only moan is that the screens soon start repeating themselves. Quite a change from the normal run isometric games, Parabola is presented attractively, with some good unfortunately, instructions are graphics; Firebird's typically overconcise. understood, Once though, Parabola is well worth getting stuck into, especially at this price.

BEN !

"Not very original, this – there's a host of games following the same sort of gameplan, and none of them are very appealing. The only real difference between Parabola and the many other O Bert games around a few years ago is that here you only have to bounce on some, not all, of the squares – which makes it very easy to play, and pretty tedious too. For the price this is fairly well-presented both graphically and sonically, but it lacks playability and addictiveness."

rotating energy discs; when he lands on one Bruce collects the disc and scores points. And when he's picked up all the discs in each sector, bounding boy can move on to the next.

But Bruce is hindered by danger blocks - squares with circular ejection devices force him upward so he crashes, moving guards can

PAUL

"The presentation of Parabola is superb, breaking a few Spectrum boundaries – six different colours in one character square!! But it's a pity there's nothing new within the game; it's all boring old mono-chromatic play areas. Though the control method seems strange at first, persistence brings high rewards. The graphics are very detailed and the perspective is believable. And though the basic idea of Parabola is old, it's a most enjoyable product, certainly worth two pounds. "

shatter his delicate frame, and direction blocks propel him in the wrong direction. To avoid these threats—and save his eight lives—Bruce must bounce up and over

COMMENTS

Control keys: definable Joystick: Kempston, Interface

Use of colours very clever, touches well employed Graphics: reasonable sprites, good 3D effect Sound; above average Skill levels: one General rating: Well presented budget game on an old theme of moderate addictiveness.

Presentation Graphics Playability Addictive qualities Value for money Overall





ARMY MOVES

Producer: Ocean Retail Price: £7.95 Author: Dynamic Software

erdhal is a member of the Special Operations Corps. His mission is to infiltrate a heavily guarded enemy base and steal information held in a safe.

To achieve this aim he must cross the seven screens of this horizontally scrolling arcada game, passing through swamp, jungle, desert and sea. Each screen must be completed before progress can be made to the next.

turbo boost. Helicopters and trucks attack, and contact with either loses a life. They may be destroyed with ground to ground, or ground to air missiles fired from the jeep. At the end of the bridge an enemy base is reached, from there a helicopter is stolen and used to reach the jungle base. An extra nine lives are now credited to our commando.

Now Derdhal flies over desert, (rich in missile silos and attacking jets), a sea full of submarines, and a jungle (complete with look-out posts). Low flying earns him credits, but is more dangerous. A



Ensconced in his helicopter, Deruhel attecks an enemy jet, while below it, a missile site opens up.

BEN

"Despite the slick presentation and the neat graphics and sonics which Dynamic have incorporated in Army Moves, it still doesn't grab me. A rigorous play-testing will soon show any self-respecting player that there's no fun involved. The first six levels are much too hard, causing increasing frustration so one gets increasingly infuriated. The use of colour throughout is dubious, there are a lot of attribute problems and some of the land-scapes are garish. I wouldn't recommend this."

from watch towers, but these can be knocked out using grenades. Shots can be fired from a crouched position and windows crawled beneath in an effort to improve your changes.

improve your chances.

Once inside the main building the central bunker is entered and the search for the safe begins. Derdhal hides behind doors and prevents them from being opened,

PAUL

"Army Moves is extremely difficult to play. Not because it's too complicated or requires lightning-fast reactions (because it doesn't), but because it doesn't), but because of the bad design of the play area and the inaccurate collision detection. The graphics are well defined, even though the colour used is appailing. Sound is below average with very boring effects, and nothing approaching a decent tune. The controls are sluggish, even with a joystick. I had little fun playing Army Moves – it's very boring, plain and a great disappointment."

and when on the stairs he cannot be seen by the enemy. Should he throw grenades whilst in the bunker he must take care as they can bounce off walls at dangerous angles. Finding the safe complete's Derdhal's mission.

9 POINTS PHRSE 9 086050 00005

At his disposal Derdhal has a jeep, a helicopter and his marching boots. The jeep and helicopter can be accelerated, slowed and made to jump (take off and land) whilst Derdhal himself moves left and right and jumps.

Energy and fuel supplies are limited, with the level remaining shown at the bottom right. Derdhal is armed with weapon systems ranging from missiles to grenades. When opposing forces are destroyed points are awarded, and the total displayed at the bottom of the screen. A bonus life is acquired after 25,000 points.

The first stage sees Derdhal's jeep travelling across a partially destroyed bridge, gaps in which are leaped by using the jeep's

In his marching boots, Derdhal tramps through the infested jungles.

good landing earns additional points at the jungle heliport.

Derdhal moves on foot towards the jungle headquarters, crossing swamps by leaping from island to Island, missing quicksands, avoiding the explosions of enemy grenades (at night their position is shown by lighted eyes) and scaring away or ducking beneath the deadly beaks of Glant Toucans. From now on soldler-boy is equipped only with a machine gun and grenades.

Having survived the jungle ordeal, the next stage involves attacking the enemy's barracks. There the main building is scanned

GARETH

"One of the most frustrating games I've seen this month—Army Moves Is almost totally inspussible, not because playing is difficult, but due to the screen layout and the slipshod collision detection. The sound is also pretty substandard, with no tune and poor spot effects. It might appeal to the Rambo types who like killing anything that moves, but for me there's no reat lastability."

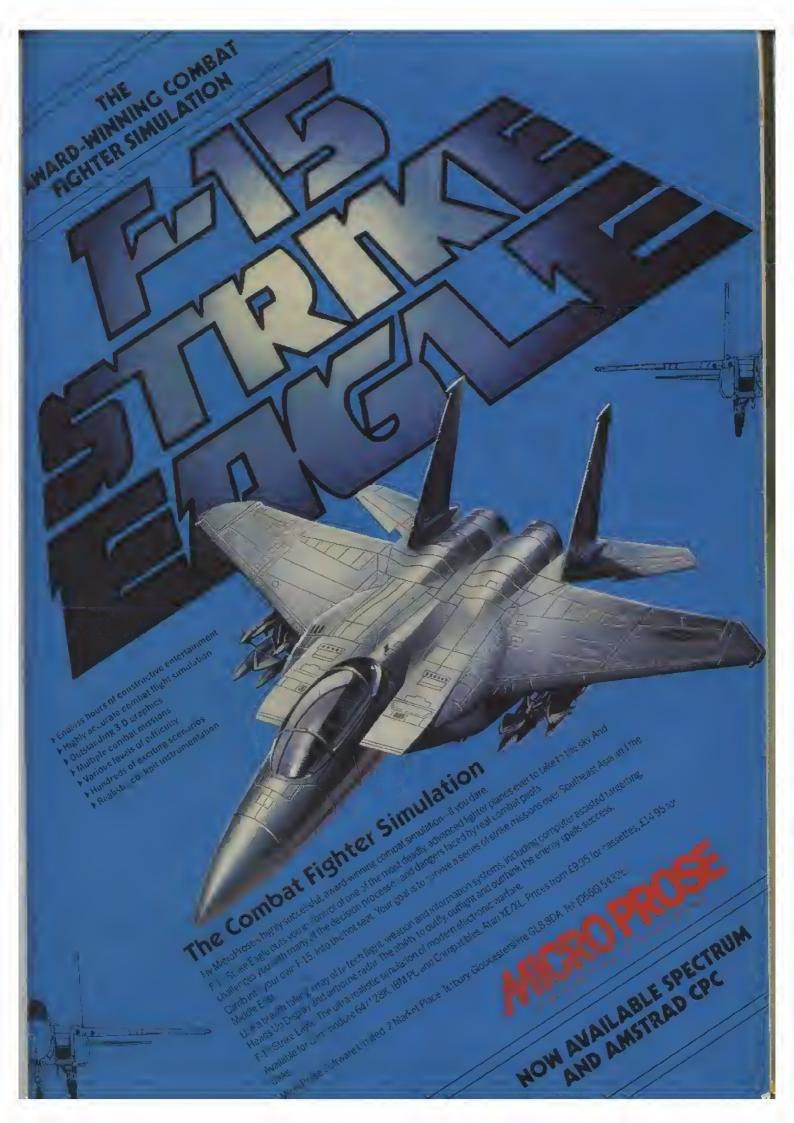
COMMENTS

Control keys: Definable; Up, Down, Left, Right, Fire Joystick: Kempston Use of colour: varied through the screens, often brightly coloured Graphics: large, detailed and well defined

well defined Sound: below average Skill levels: one Screens: seven levels with flip

screens
General rating: Dubious collision detection spoils what
otherwise might have been a
reasonable, if uninspiring
shoot 'em up.

Presentation 819
Graphics 569
Playability 522
Addictive qualities 510
Value for money 570
Overall 540







BUBBLER

Producer: Ultimate Retail Price: £9.95 Author: Ashby Computer Graphics

he inhabitants of the ancient city of Irkon have long been enslaved by the wizard tyr-ant, Vadra. To further tasten his about them he has now created magical bottles - bubblers which blow mutant-releasing bubbles.

Long ago you spoke out against Vadra, and as a result were imprisoned and converted into an immobile blob. Kintor, one time assistant to Vadra, eventually joins you. Using magical powers, Kintor endows you with temporary movement and the ability to fire lethal energy. Now you have the means to overthrow the evil war-

The bubblers are plugged by use of magic corks, automatically collected when you pass through one of the prison's trapdoors. However, some trapdoors are corkless, and entering them leads only to death. With each bottle

PAUL

"Once Ultimate was on a pedestel above all other software companies. Each release saw their cult following fill computer shops all over the country - everybody wanting to see just how far the the ACG team had pushed the Spectrum this time. Sadly those glorious times are long since gone, and the once-great company now blends in unremarkably with the rest of the market, breaks no ground. The superbly ani-meted graphics are very appealing, but the 3D per-spective isn't as convincing as that used in previous Utilmate products and the scenery appears disjointed. Those that can master the awkward control method may find a rewarding game, but I'm left with a slight feeling of disappointment.

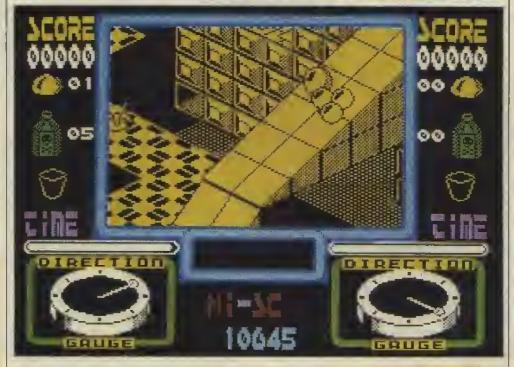
corked Vadra's power diminishes, and consequently

increases.
Trapdoors and bottles are found. by moving along and through the prison's 3D system of platforms, towers and slopes. You can move forward in a direction defined by rotation to the right or left, and can move up slopes, roll down them

BEN

"After a fair amount of practice, Bubbler has turned out to be one of the most playable Marble Madness type games we've seen. The graphics are superb, with well animated characters and pretty landscapes which scroll excellently – the title screen is impressive too. The control method is a horrible rotate left or right job, and because of this it takes a while to get used to the same is worklass. In however, I'd recommend this as it's a slick game's workings - however, I'd recommend this as it's a slick piece of playable programming.

Ancient lirkon is under the sway of evil Vadre and the naughty bubbles, and there you are, an amorpheous blob, caught on a slope in the presence of three bubbles.



under the pull of gravity, jump and catch hoists to higher structures. All manoeuvres must be precise in order to remain on the platforms and pathways, and thus evoid

plunging to your death.

As you progress, prison deni-zens are released from flashing patches around the dungeon, these may kill you outright or try to oush you off ledges — other hazards to look out for are weapons towers which fire accurate bursts of energy, and spikes which position themselves underneath as you plummet from a plat-form. Mystery bubbles are also blown from the bubblers, when

popped these release bonus points, alarm clocks (for extra time), extra lives, or bombs. Sharp objects pierce your delicate skin and burst you, if any of your five lives are remaining reincarnation occurs near the killing point.

A time limit is set for the task and

should it run out a life is lost. However, time is restored with every new life or corking of a bottle, and increased by collecting alarm clocks. The score, compass, time and lives remaining are displayed at the top and bottom of the screen.

RICKY

" I've tried really hard to like this, but the lack of playabil-ity destroys the effect created by the more enjoy-able elements, Like previous Ultimate offerings, Bubbler uses the 'turn and walk' directional control which may heve been fine before but with the addition of iner-tia and leaping it becomes very imprecise. The compass at the bottom of the screen also confuses mat-

COMMENTS

Control keys: Z C B M left, X V N SYMBOL SHIFT right, A S D Fforward, W R Y I P fire, Q E T U O jump Joystick: Kempston, Cursor,

Use of colour: monochroma-

tic playing area
Graphics: smooth multi-directional scrolling and excellent character definition

Sound: a reasonable title tune. am-packed with FX

Skill levels: one Screens: five scrolling land-

General rating: Almost back to Ultimate's old standard, although mixed reviewer feel-ings affect the ratings. Well worth it if you can master the awkward control system.

	an make t
Presentation	67%
Graphics	88%
Playability	74%
Addictive qualities	82%
Value for money	71%
Overall	78%
- Sedifin	

What's a nice blob like you doing in a place like this?





GHOST HUNTERS

Producer: Code Masters Retail Price: £1.99 Author: Philip and Andrew Oliver

rofessor Twilight, the proud owner of Nightmare Mansion, has offered a reward for the stadion of the stately home's ghosts and ghoulies. Chuck Studbuckle took up the challenge, but after five days inside the horrid house he still has not returned. As his brother, it's your duty to go and rescue him.

In order to make a room to room search, you can jump up and down, move to the left and right



RICKY

"Now this is interesting – all the fun of a platform/exploration game combined with the joy of killing for a second player. Played alone, Ghost Hunters can get rather monotonous, especially as there isn't that much to look at. However, if you tackle the game with two players it can really be most enjoyable. Solving the tasks isn't too difficult, but it should keep you playing for long enough to get your money's worth."

and climb walls. The Mansion's lifts move between floors and are activated by touching flashing objects; including a crystal ball, goblet, necklace and document. This action also increases your score, as displayed at the bottom right of the screen, but beware—the objects are not necessarily

close to the lifts which they control. A map of Nightmare Mansion is called up to verify your present position.

vampires, hands, skulls, and slime materialise to thwart you as you progress. When close, these cause the Terrometer reading to increase and your Macho Energy level to fall. These creatures can be avoided, but only with difficulty and a great drain on energy. Your remaining reserves are shown on the left hand side of the screen, and are replenished by drinking the frothing beakers of magic potion which are found about the

PAUL

"The loading screen and title music set the scene perfectly for what is a very mospheric game. The graphics are superb, with the screen containing a lot of characters and furniture—all of them detailed and racognisable. Ghost Hunters is flendishly addictive, so make sure you have a good few hours to spare before loading it up. The Terrometer and Macho meter work well together and are very useful. I loved every minute of this, it's a giveaway at £1.99."

Your only weapon is a sub-compact anti-matter. Phantom splatterer, one shot from which temporarily returns demons to their astral plane. Some creatures are indestructible, but those which are destroyed earn more valuable points.

Fearless Chuck Studbuckle prowis Nightmare Hansion helibent on gradicating everything that goes bump in the night.





"I have a lot of respect for Code Masters, they have avoided releasing the sort of rubbish that emanates from other Budget Houses. The atmospheric graphics hold together well despite lacking colour, and the characters move realistically. Roaming the haunted house becomes absorbing once the control method has been mastered, and the two player mode makes it slightly easier as you don't have to concentrate both on running around and shooting up the ghoulies. The appeal may be short-lived however, as Ghost Hunters isn't that big a game and completion should

The program features an unusual two player mode. Unlike other two player games, Ghost Hunters does not place the participants in competition or allow them to control two separate characters. Instead, One player controls the character's movement while the other operates the weapon.

COMMENTS

Control keys: Definable; Up, Down, Left, Right, Fire Joystick: Kempston, Cursor, Interface 2

Use of colour, you can choose one of two colours and black Graphics: atmospheric, well detailed and realistically ani-

Sound: excellent title music and reasonable FX Skill levels: one

General rating: An entertaining game with the added bonus of two-player mode, playable but might shade off in longterm appeal.

Presentation 74%
Graphics 70%
Playability 78%
Addictive qualities 76%
Value for money 82%

CHRONOS

Producer: Mastertronic Retail Price: £1.99 Author: The Radical Tubes

hronos is Imprisoned in another time dimension by the Mystical Dimension Weavers, beings he himself created. Six levels need to be completed before Chronos can be freed from his plight.

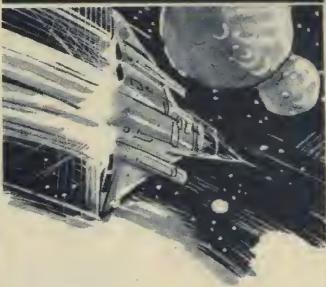
You pilot a laser-carrying space craft capable of moving up and down, and to the left and right, through a maze of constructed space comdors. Many of these are blocked by laser barriers or other obstructions that must be cleared by blasting. As you progress alien craft, lethal orbs and rotating 'yin-yangs', fly through your space with increasing frequency. Contact with these, or any part of the space

MIKE

"The proportional spacing and high score table immediately rang a Des-Des bell, and afthough it's no more than a polished Scramble, I enjoyed playing Chronos. The easiness of the first level is a hit of a let down, but it does act as a warm-up. The graphics are quite good, with explosions a bit reminiscent of Dark Star, but the game itself is almost totally different, and for £1,99, it is good value."

 Your ship (above the chimney-like structure) attacks across the seemingly endless scrolling industrial landscape.





PAUL

"Let's not beat around the bush, what we have here is simply a budget shoot 'em up. No frills, no adventure, just blasting away to your heart's content. There's little imagination graphically, but the shading makes a brave attempt to bring life. Aithough aliens suffer badly from the shakes, and the scrolling isn't super smooth either, presentation is well up to scratch, with a good Design Design type front end and score table, and a strange bit of title sound (rather than music). If you're not tired of shoot 'em ups then this could be game for you. The allens never run out, but neither does your fire power."

landscape, loses you one of three lives. For each obstruction or attacker laser-smeared, points are awarded, with an extra life acquired at 10,000 points. Occasionally, the letters B, O, N, U, S appear, which, surprisingly

Occasionally, the letters B, O, N, U, S appear, which, surprisingly enough, give bonus points should lihay be collected in correct spelling order.

BEN

"An odd little game this; well presented, it looks good, sounds fair, and other than the speed, which is a touch too slow for my liking, technically I can't really fault Chronos—but it lacks sadly in gameplay, and just isn't fun. I think Chronos helps to show that simple shoot 'em ups of this genre have gone about as far as they can on the Spectrum."

COMMENTS

Control keys: Q/A up/down, Q/P left/right, M to fire Joystick: Kempston, Interface

Use of colour: Monochromatic playing area, using shading Graphics: varied cityscapes, neatly defined, but juddery

sprites Sound: average 'effects'

Skill levels: one Screens: scrolling 'caves' General rating: A just above average shoot 'em up, mildly addictive, but with nothing really new or invigorating.

Presentation	78%
Graphics	67%
Playability	56%
Addictive qualities	54%
Value for money	62%
Overall	55%



SPY VS SPY THE ISLAND CAPER

Producer: Databyte Retail Price: £8,95 Author: Mike Reidel/ First Star

hree missing parts of a sec-ret missile are hidden on the tropical Spy Island - and you control an agent sent to recover them, in this sequel to Soy Vs Soy, a CRASH Smash in August 1985.

There are seven game levels, in which you struggle with an enemy spy to complete your mission: col-lecting the missile parts and wading out to a waiting submarine with them. The two spies, Black and White, are shown on stacked, horizontally-scrolling screens.

As in the original Spy Vs Spy, you can foil the enemy with the equipment in your Trapulator. Rope snares can be set in foreground trees with their nooses

MIKE

"Nearly everyone liked the first Spy Vs Spy, but I think this follow-up will be a disappointment to the faithful. The graphics are poor: colour is overused, the scrolling is bad, and while the scrolling is bad, and while the black spy is appealing his counterpart is very poorly defined. And setting traps is only fun for a while – though fans of the original, who've waited long enough for this, might find it worth a go."

positioned Invisibly below; spypits can be dug using a shovel, with stakes positioned at their centres and the holes covered with dirt; you can make bombs from coconuts and gasoline, drawing



In the top screen, White's approaching a wrecked aeropiane looking for fuel, while below, Black's still wondering what to do with that missile.

BEN

"The original Spy Vs Spy was one of the best games ever to appear on the Spectrum, and this could have been as good – but the implementation of the idea leaves a lot to be desired. It runs too slowly, and it's too messy to be addictive or fun. The graphics are marred by badly-defined characters and scenery – this and the two-character-scrolling combined with the use of colour produces a playing area that's really hard on the eyes. I'd stay away from this; it's substandard. "

fuel from the crashed plane on the island. But always remember that your opponent has similar

equipment

Traps can be set anywhere on the island - they're sometimes beneath the mounds of sand where you look for the missite sections. And once a trap is activated either spy can trigger it, losing all the missite sections he's collected as well as strength. When a spy's strength falls to zero, he dies and the game is over; but it can be replenished by avoiding traps and by combat with the other agent.

if you find a gun, you can use it on your opponent to weaken him and spin him temporarily out of control. But the gun's magazine isn't always full, and some bullets

are duds

When the two agents are within range, they can fight hand-to-hand, swinging and jabbing swords - some 33 blows kill a fully fit opponent. Combat ends when one spy dies, runs away, or falls

victim to a trap.
And you've also got to brave the natural hazards of Spy Island: strength-sapping quicksands, shark-infested seas and a volcano

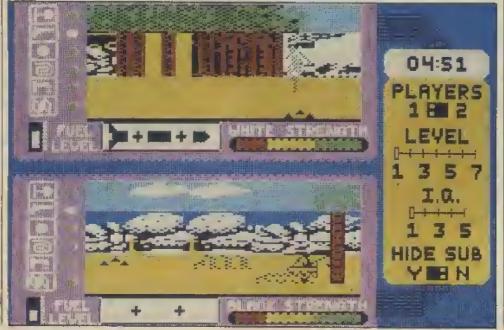
about to erupt.

To help him complete his mission, your spy can call up a map from the Trapulator (unless he's in the same screen as his opponent). A flashing quadrant indicates your spy's present position, a dotted line shows the few quadrants walked through, and some sectors contain white squares showing where the missile sections are.

PAUL

"The first Spy Vs Spy game didn't have enough colour, and now Spy Vs Spy — The Island Caper suffers from too much of the damed stuff! The screen layout seems to have shrunk a bit since the first game, but the traps have got more devious and much more harmful — and easier to set, thank goodness. (Even so, the Trapulator can get a bit uncontrollable in the heat of the moment.) The scrolling screens slow the game down tremendously; the flick-screen technique would have removed the need for character-block scrolling to avoid messy colour. The game suffers from a few bugs, like mounds of sand not disappearing once the hidden object has been found (which can be very annoying if you think there's more buried). Still, all the attractive elements of the first Spy Vs Spy are there, making it appealing to devious people — if they can stand the look of it."

Black and White trap-setting fun returns to the Spectrum, but poor old Black, who's carrying a missile, he's stuck in quicksand in the lower screen.



COMMENTS

Control keys: Qor P/A or Lup/ down, Z or N/X or M left/right, C or B to fire Joystick: Kempston, Interface

Use of colour: too much causes bad clashes Graphics: lareg and nicety defined, but poor scrolling Sound: what there is is dull Skill levels: computer's IQ goes from 1-7, and 7 player levels

Screens: twin-stacked scrolling island
General rating: Spolled by too many elements, the otherwise entertaining game only manages to be average, and a disappopinting sequel.

Presentation Graphics 46% Playability Addictive qualities 56% Value for money 49% Overali

MALASEE

CRASH June 1987



Music Machine transforms the Spectrum into a powerful music computer.

It brings together all
the features you'd normally
buy separately. Sampling,
editing, step sequencing, composition,
MIDI, digital echo effect and much more.

Sound sampling, the latest buzzword, lets you record natural sounds with the microphone sopplied, then edit them and play them back at different pitches.



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COSMIC SHOCK ABSORBER

Producer: Martech Retail Price: £7,95

he Universe is nearing destruction—a minor calamity you may avert by reaching the Interstellar Lake of Pro-tozoic Slime at its centre. But your CZ Neutrozapper has just failed its

Enroute screensful of creatures are out for your blood, and the number you must destroy on each to progress is shown screen left. The Neutrozapper has a defensive shield, and a photon canon with limited reserves (and unreliability after prolonged use), energy reserves for both, and weapon temperature, being indicated at the top.

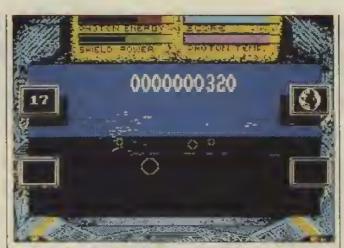
As your Neutrozapper's sys-tems are likely to go kaput, mal-functions are indicated in a panel on the screen's right-hand side. To continue, the craft's circuit board must be punched up and repairs made, but as there's no maintenance manual and you can't tell a

hyper warp grommet thruster and a hephalump's rear end apart, you've only got your wits and skill to complete repairs. Burnt-out cir-cuitry is replaced by spare parts with the correct colour coding, which can be chosen from the or screen display and placed in posi-tion in the circuit. A countdown Indictates how much time there is to make repairs. If it runs out you and your craft explode and the hopes of the Universe die with you.

CRITICISM

" 'You won't have seen the film ... There is no book ... Now find out whyl (it's 3D blast-ing fun!!!)' announces the inlay. ing tunity amounces the intay.

I'm sure any publisher or film
producer worth their saft would
instantly recognise this for the
piece of unpolished trite that it is, and promptly sling it through the nearest window. The unin-



Another fine mess! Your CZ Neutrozapper's just failed the MOT and there's the interstellar Lake of Protezoic Slime dead ahead.

teresting gameplay is further marred by slow, messy vector graphics, and on the later levels attribute problems make an appearance. The sub-game has the feel of an O level teaching - again colour is poor and UDG characters are used to represent the components. Definitely not a Cosmic release from Martech.

 "Battle Of The Planets all over again. Except this time it's much, much worse, Cosmic Shock Absorber's controls are very unresponsive, and I had great prob-lems with the cursors – they just didn't seem to do anything. The graphics are tolerable if you don't want to see what's happening -The circuit mending is about as addictive as its party game basi

Palit

SUPER ROBIN HOOD

Producer: Code Masters Retail Price: £1.99 Author: Mark Baldock

aid Marion has been by the Nottingham kidnapped Sheriff of and imprisoned in the East Tower of his castle. If Robin Hood is ever to canoodle with his true love again, he must survive the many dangers that her rescue entails

RICKY

" it's a sad but regular occurrence that a game arrives with excellent presentation and pretty graphics . . . but a rather fired game idea — Super Robin Hood is one such. However, at the regular Code Masters price this combination shouldn't disappoint many people. Learning to complete the screens successfully adds to the lasting interest, as does the variety of graphics and music. Quite enjoyable, if you're not too demanding and don't expect

> Robin enters the castle and finds himself running left, running right, leaping, climbing up and down, ducking to avoid spiders, menstrous devices and the quards' crossbow bolts, through

series of rooms and halls connected by ladders and extending platforms. Pant, pant!

Bumping into nasties, or falling from ladders, loses our woodland hero valuable health points, and if health is gone Robin fires an arrow Heavenward and dies. But picking up the Sheriff's multivitamin tab strewn about the castle. revitalises him, as well as adding to his score. More points are to be had for each guard eliminated with his bow and arrow

In search of true love, Robin Hood deals death to baddles on the uninspiring ladders and platforms.



BEN

" Here we have yet another platform game which falls into the deepening void of trashable Spectrum games. I can't honestly see anyone having fun with this for more than a couple of days as the gameplay is so boring. There's a nice tune on the title screen, but other than this the presentation leaves a lot to be desired – as does the graphical content. There are plenty of better games around for the same price – choose one of them and you'll probably have more fun.

"Yet another superbly presented Code Master game. The title tune is a great David Whittaker piece, and the options are many and varied. The graphics contain a good range of colour – atthough to prevent colour clashes the collision detection seems to be of character size – and the screens are smartly attired with some large objects. Super Robin Hood is basically another arcade/adventure budget game with some good features.

Ineeded an absorber to get over the shock of *Oosmic*. It's a pitifully basic shoot 'em up with a few add-ons. The keyboard response is appalling, making play near impossible."

GARETH

COMMENTS

Control keys: Q-T/A-G up/down, Y-P right, H-Enter left, bottom ro to fire

Joystick: Kempston, Interface 2, Cursor

Use of colour: lots of colour

Graphics: generally small and unimaginative with UDGs Sound: simple 'blip' FX

Skill levels: one Screens: repair screen and vector graphics levels

graphics levels General rating: Outdated shoot 'em up spoiled by poor graphics and control response.

Presentation	58%
Graphics	43%
Playability	32%
Addictive qualities	39%
Value for money	37%
Overall	
Overall	36%



Picking up keys enables him to activate the lifts, accessing higher levels, where more red hearts are to be collected. When all the hearts are taken from the castle rooms, Robin may move on to the East Tower, where he releases the distressed damsel and takes her home for tea.

COMMENTS

Control keys: definable Joystick: Kempston, Interface 2, Cursor

Use of colour: reasonably varied, avoids serious clashes Graphics: screens not overbusy, farge characters and simple animation Sound: good tune Skill levels: one

General rating: Some mixed feelings, but reasonably entertaining for a short while, no long lasting appeal and certainly nothing new.

	_
Presentation	65%
Graphics	66%
Playability	53%
Addictive qualities	45%
Value for money	63%
Overall	52%

EXPRESS RAIDER

Producer: US Gold Retail Price: £7.95

ue to a scheduling error, American Railways have decided to run eight express trains through your territory. As an underemployed bandit short of readies, you're certainly not going to miss an opportunity like this. However, others have similar ideas...

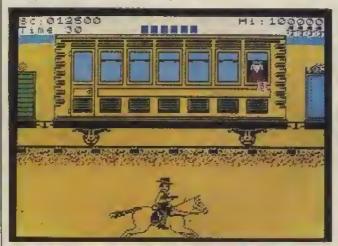
This shoot 'emup contains three levels, each of which involves win-

ning a preliminary fight – leaping a line of running coyotes – performing a death-defying train-top walk, fighting off cowboys (who try to either shoot you or brain you with bottles, coal or shovels), and finally mounting a horse and having a go at another train.

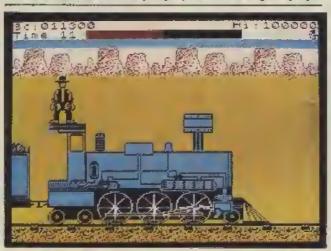
ing a go at another train.

To avoid your attackers, you can step and jump forward and back, leap upwards, kneel or lie flat. To protect yourself you can kick and punch your opponents, and when carrying a gun, plug them full of

holes.



Shoot the woman, take the money and gallop -- there's Wild West gallantry for you.



The view looks good from up here, Pard – waiting for the next stage (coach?)



Points are scored by landing punches and kicks and lobbing hand grenades, and also by shooting ducks, hidden targets and the lady in red (hit her more than once and you're dead buster).

Your enemies do fight back. Take one of their punches and kicks, miss a leap over a coyote, or get hit by a flying object and your strength is diminished (energy levels are shown at the top of the screen). One of your five fives is lost if your strength falls to zero, if you run out of time (a countdown is displayed) or if you sustain a gunshot wound.

CRITICISM

"Initially Express Raider reminded me of the wonderful Stop the Express, but it soon became quite boring. The gameplay has no real lastability, making fighting too much of a chore to be any tun. The sound is more basic than the arcade version, with no tune and horrible little spot effects. Express Raider does not deserve to be released as a full-priced game."

GARETH

"I've never been so bored, Express Raider just goes on and on and... The gameplay is repetitive and the 'teel' is very inaccurate. The idea of choosing your control type before you load the main game is years old and quite unnecessary, as you have to choose them again when it loads anyway! It looks tacky, and is much loo expensive."

PAUI

"I was I expecting a lot, but I didn't enjoy playing it at all after three or four goes. The graphics are colourful and lock quite pretty—until you get up close. Unless you really adored the arcade machine. 27.95 seems far too much to pay, and I should stay well clear of it."

MINE

COMMENTS

Control keys: Definable; left, right, up, down, fire Joystick: Kempston, Interface 2 Use of cofour: limited Graphics: large line drawings, but the characters are quite crude Sound: poor and sparse FX Skill levels: one Screens: four scrolling levels General rating: Thin conversion

	_
Presentation	Cb o
Graphics	J9%
Playabil'ty	49%
Addictive qualities	45%
Value for money	38%
Overall	47%

of an already unexciting coin-op.



Producer: M.A.D. Retail Price: £2.99

e're back to the Ten-Pin bowling lanes again, and, similar to the 'real thing', the key to success in this simula-tion is correctly timing the ball's release. If this is done too soon the bail's dropped, too late and your foot's flattened!

The bowler moves left and right along the 'top' of the alley (screen left actually), and pressing fire releases the ball. The alley threshold must not be crossed, doing so constitutes a foot fault

and no points are scored.
You have two balls with which to knock down the ten pins in a frame', with a point scored per toppied pin. Pins still standing after a delivery are displayed on an inset top left of the screen. A strike' is scored when all ten are felled with the first ball of a frame. This earns ten points, plus a bonus of the score from your next two balls. Demolishing all ten pins with both balls is a 'spare', earning a bonus of the score from your next

ball.

The score per frame and a running total over all frames is displayed at the bottom of the screen, the winner being the bowler who accumulates the most points at the end of ten frames.

CRITICISM

" Strike can hardly described as a masterplece, the gameplay is simple to the point of being tedious and high scores are achieved much too easily. Your character shuffles around fairly well and the view of the is e nice touch, but the graphics are fairly bland. The major problem is that the simutation is unrealistic - the pins don't fall logically and more often than not they fall in the same pattern no matter where your ball strikes. This would be a addition to a compilation package, but I wouldn't recommend it as a game in its own right."

REN

 "To say that I disliked Strike is an understatement. The whole impression of the game is very bare – the graphics show poor perspective and little imagination. Using the one-screen format is a bad choice – it removes the worry of whether you've put on enough spin or not – but there isn't any spin option so that detracts even more. The computer's a strange opponent too, varying from four or five strikes in a row and then mis-sing the pins completely for the rest of the frames.

" This is the third Ten-Pin bowling simulation to appear on the Spectrum. I don't particularly like the way in which the action is viewed - everything happens on one screen which means the pins are displayed in a scrunched up box at the top. Controlling the player at the top, controlling the player proves awkward, however posi-tions are soon learned and some degree of control can then be accomplished. A program for dedicated Ten-Pin fans only.

RICKY

COMMENTS

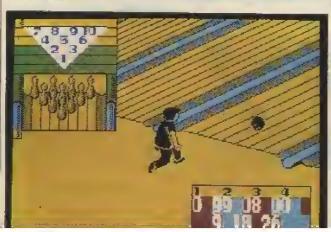
Control keys: definable

obvious, to its own cost

Joystick: Kempston, Interface 2, Cursor Use of colour: restricted; brown, black and white Graphics: good bowler sprite, otherwise uniformly simple Sound: nothing inspiring Skill levels: one Screens; one (plus inset) General rating: A disappointing simulation which has opted for the

Presentation	53%
Graphics	52%
Playability	43%
Addictive qualities	37%
Value for money	45%
Overall	40%

And aiming at the pins, it's ace ten-pin bowler Cameron. Note that smooth flick





The porky characters can be effective, but they lack the charisma of the coin-op

MARIO BROS

Producer: Ocean Retail Price: £7.95 Author: Choice Software

inning freedom from a nearby game park, creatures enter the factory where Mario is visiting his brother Luigi. Both set about removing the invading animals from their platform game world

The brothers move left and right along the multi-level floors trying to dislodge the turtles, crabs and flies whilst not losing their own footing on the floors, as their sideways momentum can carry them over an edge, onto a lower level and into the path of an oncoming beast. But Mario and Luigi can move to higher levels or drop down to lower ones as they choose

The creatures, their numbers increasing with time, appear from pipes on the top floor, and touching one, or one of the large rotating discs, causes a brother to lose one

of his three lives. Creatures are disabled by jumping up and head-butting the underside of floors which bulge upward. This knocks the pests onto their backs when they can then be kicked to the ground below, otherwise they recover and can knock the brothers off. Be careful however, a second thump can right them and once more they set off. The POW marker on the first floor can be used to stun all creatures on screen, so they can be kicked off cleanly. With all of the creatures removed, the next screen is reached. There's an screen is reached. There's an extra life earned for reaching 30,000 points.

GRITICISM

Compelling platform games are few and far between these days which is strange as most games on the Spectrum a few years ago were of this format. Mario Bros could have easily been very good, so it's a pity that it isn't. Generally the whole game seems to tack the polish of a completed product - front end excluded. The graphics are eimple but sloppy - porky characters are a nice idea but they've been badly defined so they took messy and the plat-forms, are merely platforms. A

few more sound effects during the game wouldn't go amiss as d add a lot of much needed atmosphere. "

 "I had no fun playing Mario Bros whatsoever. The game is just so terribly boring. All the screens are of the same basic layout, and once you've found the 'safe' place it holds no more challenge. The graphics are badly and unimaginagraphies are badry and drumagna-tively drawn. Playability is poor, and further limited by terrible colli-sion detection. This isn't a patch on the arcade version. Your hard earned pennies would be better spent elsewhere..

 " I couldn't believe how simple this game was; I couldn't find any plot, and I've yet to see more concise instructions. I was expecting, consequently, one of those games whose attraction lies in its simplicty: I suppose that applies to Mario Bros to an extent, but there isn't all that much attraction anyway! The graphics aren't very bad, but the characters look squashed, and the turtles are a bit chunky; colour isn't used that well, either. Overall, not bad, but for eight quid, I expect a good deal more than a simple plat-form game. "

MIKE

COMMENTS

Control keys: A/S left/right, Space to jump Joystick: Kempston, Interface 2, Cursor Use of colour; limited, generally simple Graphics: porky sprites Sound: thin on FX Skill levels: one; one or two players may take part Screens: one layout, different nasties General rating: Lifeless conver-sion of a simple coin-op, the app-eal of which lay in its cute charac-

	_
Presentation	6886
Graphics	59%
Playability	43%
Addictive qualities	47%
Value for money	41%
Overali	45%

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ATARI 520 ST





STAR RUNNER

Producer: Code Masters Retail Price: £1,99 Author: Christian Urquhart

ere's your chance to develop interplanetary athlete's foot, by representing Earth In the Olympic Games—one century in the future. In this far off contest the traditional Marathon has been replaced by

Star Running, a distance event set on a floating space platform. You are Earth's champion, and represent the planet against the cream of alien athletes.

The Star Run is a race of no fixed distance – the runner who travels furthest accumulates most points, and thus wins. The score is shown at the bottom right of the screen.

Your character moves automatically, with your task being to guide

It's a long trudge for an erstwhile Star Runner.



him left and right, and make him stop and jump as necessary. Jumping allows time wasting obstacles to be avoided - open pits trip, some surfaces cause slow running, fire pits return you down the course and teleport pads take you even further. A continual update of your course position is displayed at the top of the screen, with a flashing message displayed on reaching the half-way point.

There is a specified time limit for

There is a specified time limit for each of the six infinitely repeating levels, with the time remaining shown at the bottom left. Crossing the finish line allows the next stage to be reached, and extra time is gained by picking up the clocks which are found en route.

CRITICISM

"What a totally useless concept. Let's face it, running around and jumping over hazards isn't exactly an exciting gameptan to begin with, so the action could hardly be very compelling. The thing is that Star Runner has been very well implemented, it looks slick and is adequately presented, giving the overall impression of being a neat little game – and if there was more content it would be. Sadly, in its present form it's about as compelling as watching paint dry... stey well clear."

"As with all Code Masters

games. Star Runner contains some very slick presentation – but the content is very thin. What kind of an Olympic event are you competing in? One without opponents, but with fires to jump over, and holes to fall in! Not really in the Olympic spirit, is it? The perspective is very misleading, and the childish comments at the end of the screens ("Would a pair of crutches heip?" for instance) are boring. A totally unaddictive game, tor which even two pounds is too much."

DANK

COMMENTS

Control keys: S left, X right, H stop, SPACE jump Joystick: Kempston, Cursor, Interface 2

Use of colour: mainly monochromatic playing area with colourful front end

Graphics: basic, but strangely pretty Sound: uninspired spot effects

Sound: uninspired spot effect: Skill levels: one

Screens: six General rating: A race against time that goes nowhere in particu-

Presentation 59%
Graphics 57%
Playability 44%
Addictive qualities 42%
Value for money 55%
Overall 50%

TUBARUBA

Producer: Firebird Retail Price: £1.99 Author: **Tooba Zaidi**

aughty Tubaruba's always in trouble at school, but this time it looks really scrious. He's broken a window, been caught by the headmaster and faced with expulsion unless he pays a £50 damages blil, However, if the trainee delinquent collects this amount by the end of term he'll not only achieve good grades, he'll also wind up owning the headmaster's Ferrard.

ter's Ferrant
In his financial search, Tuba passes through a series of rooms on different floors collecting money as he goes. He can move left and right, jump up or leap down in the school buildings he hates so much. To make his task that much harder, bomb-dropping angels, egg-laying ducks, deadly ball-spitting heads, octopuses, and musical instruments fly about. Contact with any of these saps energy, which is replaced by collecting the red discs found lying about the school. Should his energy level fall to zero, Tubaruba is permanently wiped off the school register.

Overactivity also depletes Tuba's energy, so to rest his legs he drives about in one of the Sinclair C5's which are conveniently distributed around the school

Tubaruba protects himself by firing on his attackers with a concealed gun. Each kill earns a penny, but his piggy bank fills up much faster if he picks up the coins and notes which are also to be found about the premises.

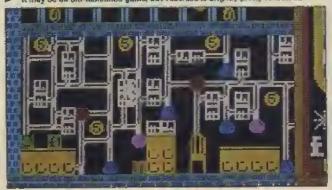
Leaping up to and touching win-

dows transports the scheming schoolkid to another part of the building where he can continue his money hunt.

CRITICISM

• " At last! Spectrum lovers can now have a loading system just like (dare I say it!) ... the good old BBC. I'm not sure I like this, but it does solve a lot of problems – and once you've finally got Tubaruba to load it isn't at all bad. The graphies are a bit basic, but they're well constructed and use lots of colour."

It may be an old-fashloned game, but Tuberuba is brightly prefty to look at.



• "If Firebird think that this is the sort of game that Spectrum owners want then they're still living in 1984... it's absolutely appalling. The tune that plays during and after the game is atrocious—the graphics consist of some badly drawn furniture and backgrounds, and contain masses of colour, none of which is aesthetically pleasing. A complete waste of money."

PAUL

COMMENTS

Control keys: Q up, A down, O left, P right, Z/M fire Joystick: Kempston, Interface 2 Use of colour: very bright Graphics: primitive and generally small

Sound: poor Skill levels: one General rating: This leap, kill and collect Jet Set Willy type game, hails from the past, but at its price it could have appeal for some.

Presentation 55 Graphics 45 Playability Addictive qualities 41% Value for money 48% Overall 42%



INDOOR SPORTS

Producer: Advance Retail Price: £7.95

This sports simulation licensed from the American Design Star Inc allows up to four people to participate in a

series of four indoor games. The events are two player only, with a second round being played if three or more competitors take part. If an odd amount of players are competing, the computer takes the place of the missing opponent.

GARETH

"This conversion is very disappointing because each game is so easy to beat – it's possible to defeat the computer on every level after only playing for a short time. The graphics are the best feature (not surprising reality, as there's no sound), incorporating smooth animation of sprites and neat scrolling action. This is not the best sport simulation I've seen but it could have a few hours of enjoyment in it. "

Slamming home the puck in Air Hockey.



Cosiness abounds as the darts commence beside the hearthside warmth.





PAUL

"None of Indoor Sport's four sub-games holds any lasting appeal, and all of them are very easy to master. The perspective of the air hockey is superb, and the action is smooth and lightning fast. The darts is the easiest game to suss — maximums being no trouble to get. Superstar ping pong is again very easy to master, mainly due to the dense opponent. Ten-pin bowling, being the best of a bad bunch, takes quite a time to get into — but again good scores are easily repeated. You may find one or two games that you like, but it's asking a bit much at £7.95."



Air Hockey is played on a table with walled edges and a goal at either end. Both players are equipped with a 'hitter', which moves with the confines of its own half, to bounce the puck into the opposite goal or to defend their own. Three playing speeds are available, with a score and time countdown given. Winner is the first player to score 12 goals within the specified time limit.

The next event is Darts. An arrow is aimed by sliding it along the bottom of the screen, the arc of the throw set by use of an angle meter and strength regulated on the power meter. A thrown dart's position is shown on the board with a message section above it indicating trebles, doubles and misses, Scores are 'chalked' on either side of the board, with a running total given after every three darts. The game is lost if available time (shown by a countdown) falls to zero.

In Superstar Ping Pong the bat is moved either manually or by the computer. If the auto-move option is chosen, the fire button is used to serve and the joystick, or appropriate keys, to determine the choice of return—this can be using backspin, an attacking smash or at variance.



BEN

"I think Advance have scraped the barret a little here. The events (most of them not too interesting to begin with) are badly implemented and none of the actual 'feel' of the originals is conveyed. The badly defined graphics are marred further by the garish use of colour. The sound is awful, there are no tunes and effects during the game are thin on the ground. Iwouldn't recommend this, it simply isn't worth the asking price."

ying angles. When manually operated the bat can also be moved left and right along the table end. If the ball is not returned onto the table, or hits the net, a point is lost. The game is won by the first player to reach 21 by two clear points:

to reach 21 by two clear points. Now on to bigger balls, this time at the Ten-Pin Bowling alley. Having positioned the bowler, an arrow is moved to determine the ball's direction and, using the joystick, its curve chosen. The ball is released by pressing fire at the correct moment during the bowler's swing. A point is awarded for each fallen pin, with those pins still standing shown at the top of the screen. Should the bowler ever cross the line on the alley, a fault is incurred and no points are scored.

COMMENTS

Control keys: O/A up/down, O/P left/right, Space to fire Joystick: Kempston Use of colour: plenty of it — a bit garish Graphics: generally large and well defined with some good scrolling Sound: none Screens: four events General rating: The sports chosen and their implementation let down some promising graphics. Pretty average.

Presentation	69%
	60%
Graphics	
Playability	49%
Addictive qualities	46%
Value for money	44%
Overall	50%

OCTAGON

Producer: Budgie Retail Price: £2.99

ou are an Octon, a creature given power by the symbol of the octagon. Trapped in the confines of a four level complex of 60 cell works, your only chance of escape lies in the successful building of this octagon from pieces held at the complex's core.

Octons move left, right and upwards, or fall under the pull of gravity. Each cell is populated by creatures such as snakes, spiders and fish, which move across the screen and increase in number with each successive level, Contact with these saps your psychic power, but for protection you carry a stun gun which temporarily vaporises your opponents.

To transfer from cell to cell, at least four tokens (T) must be gathered and taken to your 'standon' (home ptatform). Collected tokens are displayed at the bottom right of the screen, along with any relevant messages. You may choose the standon from which you exit the cell, as long as it is a neutral white-or corresponds to your designated colour. The count at the top of the screen is reduced by one unit when a new cell is reached.

A teleport is used to transport between levels, but this can only be done when they are the correct colour, and when a key is in your possession. The position of this key is displayed on a scanner at the bottom left, with its number showing which level you presently occupy.

No more than one octagon section can be picked up and carried at any one time, and access is gained to the outside world when all of the pieces have been fitted into their appropriate positions at the starting point on level one. CRITICISM

"I don't really know what to make of Octagon. At first sight it seems to be very good, but after a few goes it becomes obvious that you should be able to do more than just fly around a stack of similar screens. A quick reoptions, a short but sweet tune on loading, some average but colourful graphics and the option which allows up to four people to play but unfortunately the game is a great disappointment. Your character moves in a very jerky fashion and the interim screen that tlashes when you move from cell to cell is unnecessary and frustrating – this destroys the flow and makes the proceedings very disjointed. The above average presentation increases the value, but unaddictive gameplay is a major let-down."

PAUL

" I'm atraid i don't like Octagon

Travelling between cells, preparing to enter cell 41.



read of the inlay uncovered a little more, but it didn't really disclose how to get deaper into play. The sound is poor: there's no tune, and very few spot effects whilst playing. Although I can appreciate some of the nicer points, it isn't really that good."

GARETH

 "Things looked quite promising at first – the neat Inlay, Interesting scenario, abundance of useful at all. The graphics are colourful (almost too colourful in fact), but they look quite poor. The scenario didn't quite sink in for a while, and the gameplay didn't appeal to me at all; I didn't like the technique of pressing the initial letter of the action required. Finally, the 'arcade' sequences are pretty appalling."

3495

One of the Octagon cells, inhabited by creatures bent on preventing you from collecting takens.



COMMENTS

Control keys: Q/A up/down, N/M left/right, SPACE to fire Joystick: Kempston, Cursor Use of colour: generally bright appearance Graphics: a busy screen but generally small characters Sound: reasonable tune, but few FX

Skill levels: one – but four players may take part

Screens: 240 cell worlds General rating: an unusual game which appears more complex than it really is, and not very addictive

Presentation	66%
Graphics	49%
Playability	45%
Addictive qualities	44%
Value for money	52%
Overafi	47%



GUNRUNNER

Producer: Hewson Retail Price: £7.95 Authors: Christian **Urquhart and Mike Smith**

distant ice-clad planet is under attack from the dreaded Destrovians, with its complex plutonium pipework being the saboteurs' prime target. Others have tried and tailed to eradicate these attackers - now Gunrunner remains the only hope for this beleaguered world.

Each of the game's ten levels consists of a pipework landscape on a horizontally-scrolling screen. Gunrunner moves left and right through this, jumping and kneeling where necessary – collecting a jet-pack allows him to fly up and down to greater heights and depths.

As he moves forward, groups of Destrovians attack from both left and right, moving in at varying speeds and heights. Contact removes one of "Aunner's three tense with those remaining shown." lives, with those remaining shown at the top right. On losing a life; our hero restarts from the beginning of the present level.

Gunrunner must also beware of dangerous gaps in the pipework; booby-trapped Destrovian supply domes; perilous, opening bomb doors; mines (against which there

each level. This destroys aliens and scanning orbs, with points awarded for each and a total shown at the top left. A bonus is added when 15,000 points have been earned.

upgrade his weaponry, Gunrunner picks up equipment discarded by previous resistance fighters. This includes; a Multi-fire Unit which converts his blaster a rapid-fire tridirectional

Guarunner goes in search of weaponry to aid him in his battle against the Destrovian invaders.



Life's a mite easier with a jetpac strapped on, and Guarunner can gel above the toriurous pipes for a better shot.



is no protection); and pedestalmounted scanning orbs (unarmed, but worth valuable points).

A blaster constitutes our hero's only protection at the beginning of

weapon; a shield with finite energy reserves giving protection against contact with Destrovians (a status indicator shows remaining energy levels); a short duration jet-pack;

MIKE

"Hewson's considerable reputation led me to expect a great deal from Gunrunner. However, I was disappointed. While the packaging and general presentation are all that I expected, the game itself is not; although I'm sure that many companies would be proud of a shoot 'em up of this calibre. The graphics are reasonable despite the scrolling jerking occasionally, but I found it lacking in gameplay, and consequently unaddictive. The format is becoming dated, and it's a bit much to ask £7.95 for an ordinary shoot 'em up." " Hewson's considerable reputation led me to expect a great shoot 'em up.

PAUL

" Shoot 'em ups can be good if they're playable - but Gun runner lacks any positive points, and to my mind is a failure due to its unfriendly teel. The graphics, which are the game's most attractive aspect, are too squarely aspect, are too squarely drawn to be inspiring. Sound is also limited, being con-fined to a few neat in-game effects and an average title tune. Gunrunner is off-putting from the start, and once I had mastered it I could find nothing to make me have another go. "

and a poison device which eliminates all aliens in the immediate area - but only on extra limited occasions. This equipment is acquired by touch, and more than one piece can be carried simultaneously. An onscreen message indicates if a jet-pack, shield or poison is carried jet-pack, shield or poison is currently in our hero's possession. In the absence of a shield, contact with a Destrovian removes all of Gunrunner's collected equipment.

level is completed upon reaching the striped emergency defence computer. Gunrunner then automatically receives a jet-pack to help him fight his way to the next level within the specified time limit.

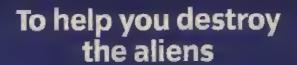
" I'm disappointed, because this is the first unfortunate game Hewson has produced. The presentation is good, especially the loading screen with its scrolling message and excellent tune. However, the package is a little too similar to Orldium for my liking — the monochromatic playing area, the alien attack patterns and the aliens them selves all bear an uncanny resemblance to the this is the first unfortunate resemblance to the aforementioned masterpiece. Gunrunner Isn't compelling or playable enough to earn my recommendation.

BEN

COMMENTS

Control keys: définable Joystick: Kempston, Cursor, Use of colour: background colours vary on generally monochrome playing area Graphics: good definition, large, but lacking in variety Sound: a bit thin on FX Skill levels; one Screens: ten scrolling land-scapes of increasing difficulty General rating: Something of a surprise from Hewson, nor-mally associated with highcontent games – a rather ordi-nary and not very addictive shoot 'em up.

Presentation Graphics 480 Playability Addictive qualities Value for money Overall





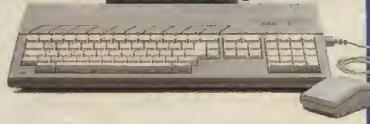


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ATARI 520 STM



Great excitement ensues. The Towers are to be invaded by one of the first ever Nintendo games consoles from Mattel, Could this be the end of home computers as we know them? There's a counter-opinion to last month's anti-Sega tetter, and now we await to see whether the Nintendo is better than the Sega, Certainly, within a few days the offices will be ringing with Super Mario Brothers as everyone fights for a change to put the machine through its paces, and no doubt you'll all be hearing more in future issues. Meantime, back to Spectrum gaming, and this months! Forum.

SOME SOFT POINTS

Dear Lloyd,

First, a large amount of letters pub-lished in your section have been saying that the vital component in a good game is originality. I think otherwise. I agree that it is Important (it keeps the software industry going; without it the same games would just get churned out all over again) but it is not vital. No, to discover what really makes a game great we must delve further into it, past all outward appearances and basic ideas. I believe that it is the game itself, meaning what actually happens, and how well the idea is programmed and implemented.

For example, when my brother Richard (of Frank the Flea fame) first saw me playing Lightforce, he said, 'Hey wow, somebody's re-released Space Invaders! I realised that he was right. Now you can hardly call an invaders clone original, but that didn't detract from the enjoyment I got from the game at all. I kept on playing it simply (no, not because it had trendy graphics) because I enjoyed the game. I thought it was fun to play.

l'il quote some more examples

you wish. How about Head over Heels? Or maybe I could take examples from the stream of Gauntlet clones, many of which have been good. Even the Monty Mole games can hardly be called original, yet they're successful and fun to play. See what I mean? Equally well, original games

don't have to be good. Look at Psi 5 Trading Company, Doc the Destroyer and Terror of the Deep, to mention but a few.

Of course, that's my view. People are entitled to their own opinions, and if you like original games, so be it. Richard prefers games with good atmosphere and aesthetic sense (graphically speaking). Maybe a good game consists of a combination of all the factors—graphics, sound, presentation, atmosphere, originality. programming, implementation and so on. It's hard to tell. On to another point. Yes, it's the

dreaded 'Budget games' debate again. How can people say they're all trash? Just look at Agent X, Uni-versal Hero, Feud, Amaurote, I Ball, and quite a few others and

you'll see what I mean. Okay, so many are rubbish, but then again, aren't many full-priced games?

It obviously proves that there are some companies in this world more concerned with producing a high-quality product which will please the consumer than with making a profit. I'm afraid that money is all people are bothered about these days, rather than pro-viding a useful and/or entertaining

Anyway, if software companies do only care about their bank balance, they don't (and Richard will confirm this) know the real pleasure of producing software. This is the pleasure derived from the knowledge that there are people out there who are playing your games, enjoying them and thank-ing you for producing them. After all, they deserve to get something

for their money.
Oliver Welsh, Northampton

To successfully make a profit, a company must produce good material, otherwise the punters fall by the wayside, and down go the profits. To that end, I doubt whether software houses deliber ately set out to create second-rate games – but sometimes they come out that way. Caring about one's bank balance is something everyone tends to do, surely? Companies are no exception, since one of their prime require-ments is keeping their staff paid! Whether such concerns over whelm the creative spirit is another matter altogether . . .

Dear Lloyd,

Dear Loyo,
I'm writing to you about a few
things. Firstly the Hall of Slime.
Scrap it! All of the people on the list
have completed games that have
been on the market for more than
a fortnight so pokes and hints have a formight so pokes and nins neve been printed. What you should do instead is, as Steve said half way down page 43 of your May issue, print only photos of people who have completed new games such as Nemesis. I completed this on Sunday 29 March at 12.25am. You get the message 'Well done, you have saved the planet Nemesis'. Moving on now to Academy, I would like to know when Russel Mulcahy and/or Camilo Mesias completed it, if they have. I am also in total agreement with Richard

There's also a complaint, yes it's hard to believe but it's about pre-views – they're too late! Take for example Nemesis - the preview came in the May issue. And I had already bought, played and completed the game before the end of March, so could you explain why they're so late?

Bailey about Adventure Previews,

let's see some.

And finally, thanks all round to people at CRASH Towers for an excellent mag that is slowly impro-ving each month, hard to believe but it's fact, by my reckoning any-

Neville Chesworth Junior, Cornwalt

I'm still awaiting the last questionnaire results to see what answer has been received regarding the Hall of Slime and a Readers' Challenge, before recommending a revamped hi-score table. Sorry about the Nemesis preview, but quoting months like that makes it seemeven later than it really was – the issue, after all, came out at the end of April. In that case, the review version arrived only days after we previewed it, and too late to stop the printer!

DIG THE OLD POKES

Whether is not you printed that Cuthbert carbon because lasked. Lexpected a new series, not a lead of repeats. Please persuade Chartie Brooker to come tip with some new Cuthbert carbons fit he has and you refuse to print them, then risk including the wrath of Nick Peers which is not a pretty spant.

own a Specicy + trememoer them? and I minimisested in programming, but I'm not that good. I'm sick and tiped of hearing one of my friends bragging on about his rive experience, etc., so would be very grateful if Mr Goodwin would not lorsake the 16k, 48k and + computers.

computers.
I agree with Paul Hamisen (April estition) about dedicating a page to old POKEs. You could cramplenty of old games onto one page the cause no fancy loader is needed for the majority of POKEs. Alternatively, you could make yourself at dy bit on the side by publishing

a cheape m nibook for second a creape miniocox for second hand peper) dedicated to oldie POKEs. Trink of the profits you could make (I would buy a copy) Nicholas Peers, Powys PS Bet you don't print L'angammarch Wells at the end of my let-

I wouldn't dream of printing any such thing at the end of your jetter. However, if it pass on your comments to Simon, and to myself with regard to more oldie POKEs (when I'm next in the Towers of course.



IRISH USER GROUP

I wish to inform you of a new user group which I am setting up. It is not based on a certain machine and has a monthly free news sheet. Members are welcome from all over the Republic and the North - not just Dublin. I would be grateful if you would mention the group in your magazine as I am having trouble finding members Ben Walsh, 20 Palmerston Gardens, Dublin 6, Ireland

There you go, Ben - a mention. Hope it does some good!

RE LOGO

Dear Mr Mangram

bear for marginari, in the May issue I read a great big insult to the CRASH logo by Bon Bliot of somewhere in Devior. He said that the brill and fantastic mag logo was crappy, with the two-dimensional sparky bits. But I, being a faithful reader, think it's ace and would be very very sad, fed up, disappointed and so on if the loge was changed. James Simpson, Shropshire

And so do I, James, The Union Jackish't the world's prettiest flag either, but I bet hardly anyone

For a few months now my son has been without his Spectrum, the withdrawal symptoms are some-time painful to see. Especially when new games arrive and he cannot even try them, What frust-

If only we had looked through the back issues of CRASH before we acted, and so begins the long

sad tale.

One evening in February, I arrived home to be told the computer wasn't working. My son had pulled the interface from the computer with the power still on!
Something, we later discovered, which was quite a common occurrence.

urrence.
"Send it to Video Vault," said my son. But I didn't like the idea of sending something like that through the post, so I suggested a local repair firm who advertise in all duringal pages.

all our local papers.
My son's birthday was coming up, so his grandmother said she would take it and pay for the repair

as his present.
On receiving the computer, the man put it on some testing machine, and said it didn't seem

too bad, it would cost about £25 and would take six to seven days. Seven days later we hadn't heard seven days later we hadn't heard anything so grandmother decided to ring them. A voice said that it hadn't come back yet and they would phone us when it was ready. Two weeks later the phone rang and we were told the computer was 'Beyond accomplicate anything the second state of the computer was 'Beyond accomplicate anything the second s and we were told the computer was 'Beyond economical repair' The next day, after my son had said he would like It back to send salo na would like it deck to send to Video Vault, Grandma went to collect it. She was told it would cost £10 for the labour. This she

cost £10 for the labour. This spe wasn't expecting and was really shocked, and said so. She didn't want to pay out for something that was useless so she left it there. She went back again the next day with a friend, who ended up herder quite a heated aroument. having quite a heated argument after which they were asked to leave and shown the door. She paid the £10 and took the computpaid the £10 and took the computer. The next day she brought if to my son. It was still wrapped in the invoice paper, When my son removed it, he soon realised this was not his computer. That afternoon he and his uncle went back with it and tried to explain what had happened and all they said

was, they had left the day before with it so there was nothing they

could do about it.
We went to Citizens' Advice
who seemed helpful. They sent us
to the Office of Fair Trading where to the Office of Fair Trading where the man gave us no hope at all by saying that the item needed repairing, so we couldn't put a value on it, if seems incredible that someone can get away with something like this, if only we had sent it to "Video Vault' first!

Kirkaity, Southampton.

L Kirkaldy, Southampton.

I've kept on file the address of the computer repairers you sent your son's computer to. Unfortunately! son's computer to. Unfortunately I can't print it at the moment as we would have to investigate further. It does sound as though you have been very unfairly, if not improperly, treated. But unless you had been clearly told that there would be a fee for examining the machine, the fact that it was not repaired (whoever's it really was) means that the company did not tuffit their contract with you. Perhaps a matter for your solicitor? I M

FINGS AIN'T WOT THEY USED TO BE

Dealerne Liayd, After reading the Points of View style exicle about Arkanoid is your way Forum, it suddenly dawned owne that things just aren't what

chine that things just aren't what they used to be The test game I bought was The Boggit, and three months ago I need and the CRASH Smashes compilation tape with my subscription. Long gone are the days when would rush into town every weekend to buy games like 30 Tens. Handices Golf (I still play II) and Lunar Jetman, and swap them excredity for legends such as Jet Set Willy Those were the days! I remember with tondness struggling away to toad my copy of Jetpac, Irantically indiving with the youthne controls. And when it toeded—Wowl it was just like a tream.

presented by the second second

parties, and the price to pay is dear er or over in most cases!

Suil, parhaps there's hope yet and turns the answer less in retrogression (LMLWD). After all the over-layes that's been released fately, water strazzy graphics and no real game, out, comes the 1892 favourite manew form. Arkanoid, the air version of Thru. The Wall- and we like it yee, it's good stuff, proof that we're not air begins and laken in by good.

looks, (never ludge a game by its grephics, that's what I say) Arkancid is but a simple game, yett's intriguing, exciting, and ADDICTIVE!!

think that the software com-

ADDICTIVE!!

I think that the software compenses today are just trying too same to come up with new ideas, and after they ve given up, they concentrate on the graphics, and forget about the underlying game. I mean, think about it. We have never had a really good, polished version of Space bevaders, or even Pole Position (excluding Enduran Role Position). The print at least is some of this leater, hot only forme, out there who are looking for a new direction. But, if you don't print it, at least print my loke — What do you call it if a cat gives away ci, 1000, m and then gete run over by a bus? Gentor osity killed the Cat!! (Ha, Hat) Douglas trving, Rentrewshire Douglas irving, Rentrewshire

Yes, ven droit, i'msure. However' with reference to what you ve just said. I noted that for the past few weaks the Spiky Haired Ones on ZZAPI have done nothing but play Firebird's Zolyk. — a garrie so one that even on the 64 it looks like an encient Spearum grid game. I must admit I've been playing it enciestly foo it's so additive! nope it's out soon on the Spectrum toe. Graphics are primitive, sound unimportant, game so simple it's silly. Great game though. Food for thought, hun?

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INFANTILITY CREEPS UP

Dear Lloyd, I think I have just started my second childhood, yes, I've been finally hooked at the tender age of twice key of the door plus two
years. No it's not drugs or anything
nasty like that, but playing my
son's computer.
What great game finally
accomplished the Impossible?

Dynamite Dan II. This was the first game that I took any notice of. I found it quite reasonable to get about by using the joystick (I'm ter-

rible on the keys I find my fingers don't co-ordinate as well as they used to). It had terrific graphics as far as I'm concerned but I give it 100 percent for addictiveness. Any time I could find I spent on the computer, while my son was at school, and late at night when I

school, and late at hight when I couldn't sleep. Who am I kidding—I was that besotted it was all hours of the morning before! gotto bed. The only other game to give me sleepless hights was Starquake, I found this very playable. The colour and graphics were very good with not too many nasties to avoid. Having finished these two, I am looking around for something looking around for something

along similar lines, so far I haven't found it. I'm persevering just now with an oldie, Atic Atac, but keep getting killed, but never say die

Mrs iris Learmouth, inverurie

l don't think your problem is as serious as you may think, Mrs Learmouth, and certainly a couple of Asplin after dinner may cure you completely. On the other hand, perhaps taking the com-puter and monitor to bed might be more relaxing and less deleterious on the high scores . . .

INCONSISTENT

Dear LM, Ithink CRASH is totally brill except Ithink CRASH is totally brill except for one thing, the ratings. Supposing apport game has average presentation and a Smeah has average presentation as well, the reviewers tend to give the Smash a much higher presentation rating. This does not give a totally clear view of the two game's different aspects.

William Blok, Gloucestershire

I think you would have to quote examples to prove your point, William. On the whole I think the system works well, and Smashes are invariably well presented games (though not always), and this is reflected in the ratings they get. Certainly Presentation ratings vary quite a lot from review to review and yet don't reflect in the same way the Overall rating. I think you would have to quote

BAG OR NO BAG

Deer LLoyd (alias Ivan Snotsky), I feel it's my duty to inform you that a certain high security organisa-tion must apprehend your humble self and deprive you of that loyal paper bag which has screened your face from society for so long. The reason behind our activities is this: We feel your behaviour of hiding your face is extremely agitating and causes a small percentage of CRASH readers to begin a spell of psychiatric treatment.

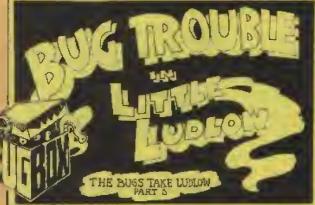
Underneath the bag, according to reliable sources, (NOT Hunter S Minson – no death threats please), and many nights spent leafing through highly classified documents, we should find a very bald, lonely Soviet spy. SO

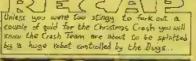
Alan Mitchell, Edinburgh

Rubbish! I'm neither bald nor lonely, nor do I work for the Rus-sians (although I'm told they pay well, and I could do with a salary rise – hint, hint). Still, can't stay here chatting to you all day, I've just got to nip out and get a new supermarket carrier bag.

NEW FANZINE

ateri Llayd. arrina la carole acid official du o e a agasinis salled Spectrum Games, livge it en my bad a Amstrad PCMB612 and faen its in to redandsent through th my heads (and maybe two) will on mis. If any CRASH readers are interested in reading S2, then please with 16 me al. Spectrum Games, 1 Maurice Road, Soa ford, East Sussey, BN25 180, 25 Listersuch e smallworkforce (©) only cover 46K Spectrum games but when my transission me I will be able (o cover 126K games and periapa tookit software Malcolm Young, East Slisse)t

























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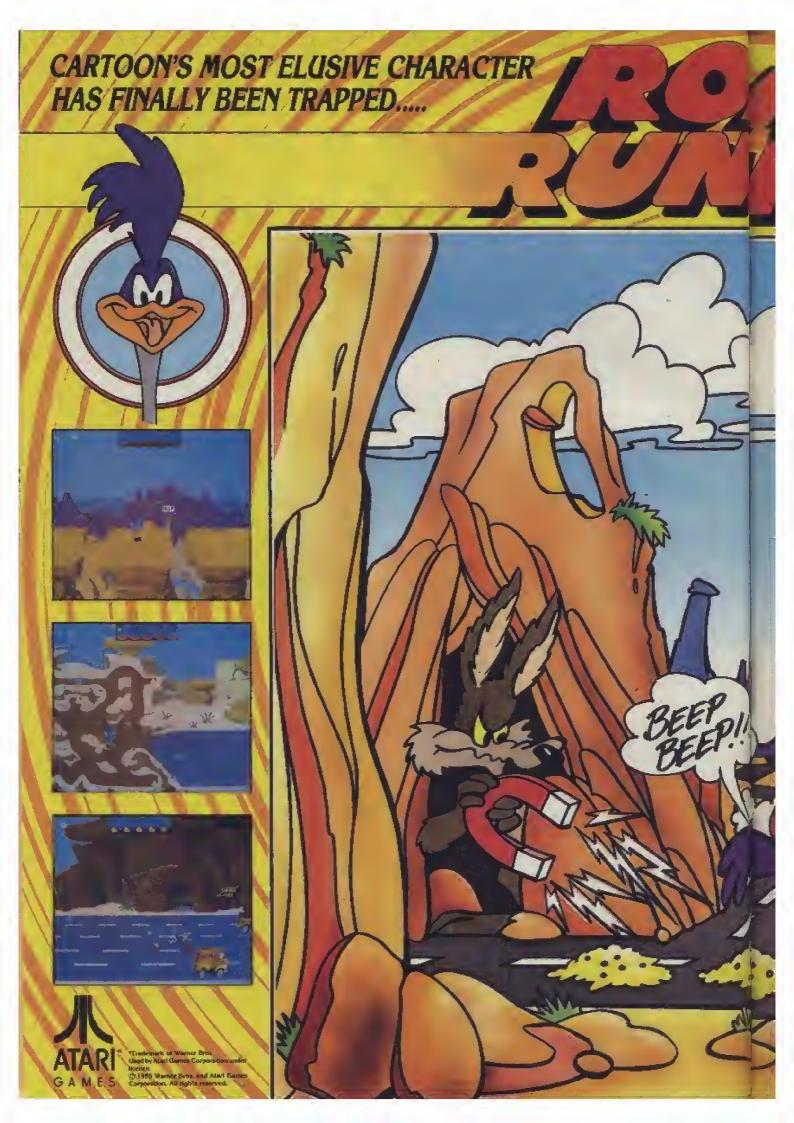
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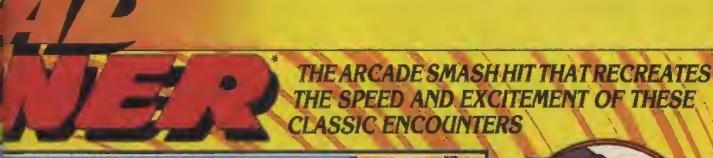
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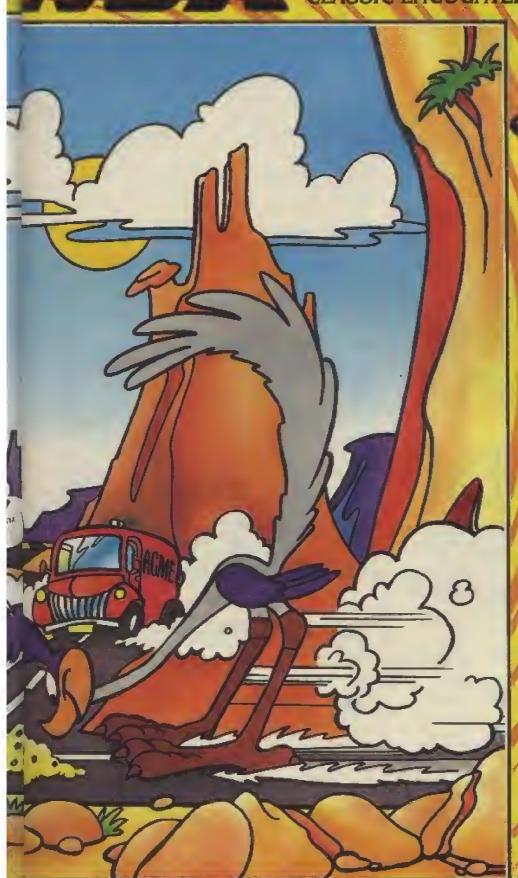
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HOW LONG IS A PIECE OF STRING?

How long do you feel the Spec-trumwill last as a games machine? Another one or two years? When will it be superceded as the micro of the masses? The answers are that it is anyone's guess. But let's face it, the Spectrum is an anti-quated machine; it's been around with us for four and a half years! The graphics and colour capabilities looked great when compared with that great dinosaur, the ZX81, but they now look dated against arcade machines and many newer computers today.

Time has taken its toll on our dear friend, and I for one feel that it's time to move on to better things. I've heard that a Spec-trum+3 with boilted on disk-drive is soon to be launched. But why? Instead of producing better and more advanced machines, comouter manufacturers are producing revamped and up-graded versions of old machines; the Spectrum is undergoing its fourth trans-formation! Adding a disk drive to the Spectrum will enable you to access games faster, and to break-up games BBC Elite style but who needs to do this when the 128K of memory is rarely used to any great extent, let alone its tull notential?

This brings me on to my next point which is innovation (or rather the lack of it) in games today. People blame it on the film tie-in and accountants running many of the larger software houses, and I feel that this is true to a certain extent. But I believe that innovation also stems, or is inspired by the hardware. For instance many great innovations were made in the early life of the Spectrum - Filmation, platform games, Landscaping, beat 'em ups and so on. But the amount of innovation has fallen off in the last couple of years. I feel that the main reason for this is because the Spectrum has out-lived its days. The whole micro-computer industry has stagnated because no one is bold enough to introduce new and better computers. How many new micro-computers, which you or I have heard about, were brought onto the mar-ket last year? The answer: nil.

Just imagine playing games on a computer with arcade quality graphics and sound, a large amount of memory and a modem which would open up the relatively

.0

unexplored area of 'multi-user games', it could include such fea-tures as masking, attribute-free graphics and collision detection – heaven on earth for programmers! but it's not because such technology is not available that we are not aying on such machines - It's the ancient problem of the price. Such machines are usually found in the personal computer price-bracket (about £1,000), not the sort of thing many people can afford for Christ

But wasn't it Sir Clive himself that brought micro-technology in the form of the ZX80 into a pricerange afford able by the masses? why can't it be done again? Perhaps it's because the microcomputer industry has become so stagnated that any computer launched would find itself in the vicious circle of people refusing to buy it because of a lack of compatible software, and companies refusing to produce software because of the lack of hardware

But there are two ways of combatting such an occurrence. One is to make the computer compatible with other machines (Amstrad and Commodore are in a perfect position to do this) while still ensur ing that the machine is substan-tially different to warrant calling it a

different machine. The other way is for the manufacturer to support the machine by creating a special software house (Sinclair did it). Amstrad and Commodore are again in a good position to do this. So Commodore, Amstrad, all you budding programmers out there (and you accountants too), let's put the adventure back into the computer industry before it's too

M Furtodo, London

I'm not so sure that Commodore are in much of a position at the moment to create a software label to support any new venture. After all, they haven't exactly done much to promote their own Amiga in this manner, Amstrad's method. creating a label and buying in (largely Spectrum conversions at lirst) from a position of strength, was very successful. Yet in Britain today, the support for Amstrad games is very slender. A software house can consider itself lucky to ship out as much as 5,000 units of an Amstrad game to distributors, compared to trebble that of a Spectrum or 64 game. Bolting on a disk drive does have many advantages, opening up new fields for games while maintaining compatability (hopefully!).



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ter inyour April a dition. He put for walfo his points against the Saga Console and I would like to put

- 34

Console and I would like to put mine faxit.

As he rightly said the Saga will have much better sound and graphics. The Saga has 32 colours whereas the Commodors 64 for instance, only has eight. The Saga has a white house generator which makes the most arrazing explosions. Also, the Saga comes with two cysticks and a free game Transbol.

His biggest point was the lack of originality finits first releases. These are the light games to appear on the machine, they renor

likel at a loc darno, Anyway, can exementer the first releases for the Spectrum and Commodors, nearly all Pac Mari denes and racing games?

I think that the Sega will take off in a couple of mouths despecially because of the superbinetanticad cantridges and the Segacards (the Segacard contains a huge 256K).

By the way, Ariolasoft state that they hope to hing oil three games cach mouth, think that this should improve the variety.

improve the variety: D Charles, Leicester

wait and see what happens. My be it still on the home computer, yen as a games machine, because of its versatility.

r'S TERMINAL

Dear Lloyd, It had to happen – you brought hack The Terminal Man. Why? The Terminal Man is boring with a capital '8', CRASH is about Spectrum computer gaming – It is not a storybook. Now, don't come out with the usual rubbish, 'If we kept CRASH as only a computer game mag it would get boring.' CRASH wasn't boring before Terminal Man or Tamara Knight (which is worse), It I wanted a storybook I'd buy one. I don't expect it from CRASH. So keep CRASH as a computer mag, akay? computer mag, okay? Oh, by the way, I think your

covers are fantastic. William White, Hants.

When we ran the first series of Ter-When we ran the first series of Ter-minal Man, the CRASH tionnaire results of the time indicated approximately a fifty-fifty split between Indifference and liking — which isn't a bed ratio. It means something like 60 to 70,000 read-ers really want to see Terminal Man every month. We must listen to our readers — at least until the most recent questionnaire results. most recent questionnaire results errive (soon).



MODEST PRAISE FOR LLOYD

Dear Lloyd, I Felt It was time to write again. First thanks for Starglider as my prize for letter of the month in November. I bought a 128 +2 for the boys for Christmas so we got the full effects of Starglider, and what superb effects they are! I'm 36 now and can't help feeling I'm a little old to read CRASH, but I still read it every month. It's even got to the stage now where I read it in the car, so I can enjoy it first without having t ripped from my feeble grasp. I got a new walking frame and batteries for my hearing aid for Christmas by the way

I must congratulate you on your superb work on the magazine Lloyd. The Forum, Playing Tips and Previews are all well written. ively, and interesting. I would have thought such a volume would cause you to get bored with it all and just do the job, but no you're keenness shows through in every

word. Well done.

Now to the point of my letter. It is in reply to Shashy Dass. Forum May. Shushy? Anyway his words 'an eight bit machine running at 50 m/s with no independent graphics'. Well Shashy you obvi-ously don't program the thing. Mine is a good friend, a hated

adversary, a person I love, some-one who brings on bouts of swearing to turn the screen blue and something I could not now manage without. I call mine Speccie, what's yours called?) and I have deep involved conversations with it. Of course it doesn't answer, it either rewards me with what I've been trying to get it to do for weeks, or it shuts down completely, refusing to allow me an access without a re-set. In truth of course I know a crash is my fault. but in my heart of hearts I know it's sulking because I haven't been

Come on Shashy, an eight bit machine? No chance. A Spectrum is more than a machine, it's a way of life

Paul Tyler, Surrey

I talk to my Hermes typewriter as well (at least the 1935 machine, the 1922 just wheezes now), it has been known to sulk occasionally but whenever I threaten to turn it in for a Joyce, I usually get results. It's a question of being firm, but kind with them. Thank you for your lavish praise, it's a pity this page isn't in colour, or you would be able to see me blushing.

HOOKED AT 16

Dear Lloyd, I'm a girl of 16 years who is really hooked on computers especially, the Sinclar Spectrum. Your CRASH magazine had been recommended to me about six months and selfmonths ago, so I went out and bought it and — by golly this is great, 'what colourful reviews'! Much better than the other Sinclair

mags.
Sol decided to save my monthly pounds for this wonderful mag. It also helped to guide me in the right also helped to guide me in the right. track in deciding which games to buy. So I went out to a computer games shop in my area and bought a few of the games that were CRASH Smashed. And after l bought these It came to my notice

that this 'crook' was selling the that this "crook" was selling the games dearer than the retail prices in your mag. For example, two days ago I bought Foud which was priced at £1.99 in CPASH, but in the shop where I bought it, it cost me£2.99. Surely he can't do this? It's robber

Jenny Hoft, Northern Ireland

I'm not sure on the pricing struc-ture in Northern Ireland, although I we in Northern Ireland, although I would have thought it should be the same as over here, but some times the retailers may have to add something on for transportation costs – certainly true of Eire (as well as the rate of exchange). I should go back and complain, see what your retailer has to say for what your retailer has to say for himself.

And another one bites the dust. And talking of dust, summer's here with a vengeance in sleepy Ludiow. The muddy, rutted tractor tracks between the idyllic hedgerows, have turned into rockhard, dustbowls, As I cycle back home up the hill, away from the cool, breeze filled moms of CRASH Towers, I choke on the rising clouds of dust from my bicycle wheefs. Anyway, enough of this Laurie Lee style prose. If you've anything to say about Spectrums, their games, the people who play the games or the people who supply them, write to me: LLOYD MANGRAM, CRASH FORUM, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 10B. I'll be bare.

MY NOVITIATE

Dear Lloyd.

I've recently bought a Spectrum 48K from one of my friends for £75. This included, 138 games (30 originals), a joystick interface, a micro-drive interface with microdrive and two cartridges, an Amstrad 2090 radio cassette recorder to load the

At first, I thought this to be the best deal I could ever make with anyone, not so, I made an even better deal with W.H. Smith, when I bought the March 87 issue of CRASH. I couldn't believe it. All a beginner like me could want to know about software and hardware for his morsel of a speccy, in the shape of straightforward news, reviews, previews, maps and not so reliable adver risements, only to be expected, and all this only cost a quid. Fab! First of all I like the way the ads are kept on their own pages and

are not shoved at the boftom of reviews, this gives the customer, or should I say reader, the choice whether he reads the ad or not

The idea of ordering back numbers of CRASH appeals also because I'm a late starter, and I could do with info to reveal the depths of my Spectrum.

The reviews are honest, with an ideal rating scheme, but a lack of colour in screen shots spoils it somewhat, although I must add that a substantial improvement in colour was noticed in April's edi-

One game reviewed lived right

up to scratch. Feud is one of the best games I've ever played. As for CRASH's solution to it. I've got a much easier one; Get fireballs, Get lightning, Got heal, Get Leanoric! In the March issue, I detected

some tension on the subject of POKEs. I think they're great, and my thanks goes to the people who come up with them. As a beginner, it gives me pleasure when typing POKEs to learn more about the keyboard, as I have not read the manual yet - even more pleasure is felt when they work!

While on the subject of POKEs! while of the Stage of Forces should point out, as will many others, that line 100 of the Gauntiet POKE should read:

IF PEEK 32814=16 THEN LET A1=82: LET A2=184. The THE should read as THEN.

One thing CRASH, I definitely do not like the drawings in your mags of Graeme Kidd, John Minson, Derek Brewster, Philippa Irving, Jon Bates, Simon Goodwin and Brendon Kavanagh, They make people, who I'm sure look alright, look positively awful

Lloyd, as I have said, I have had a great time using my computer with the help of CRASH, please could you initiate me into the readers' clan by publishing my letter in the most convenient issue. Justin Coombs, London

And this was the most convenient, Justin! Sorry about the Gauntlet POKE typing error. They do creep through occasionally. I hope you continue to enjoy CRASH – and keep writing in

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MIKE SINGLETON, Lords
Of Midnight creator, the
man behind Doomdark's
Revenge and the notorious
Games Pack One, decided it was
about time he spilled the beans.
During a visit to Ludlow with
fellow-members of the CONSULT
programming team, he was pressed
hard by RICHARD EDDY and BEN
STONE, and answered irrepressible questions such as 'What's
really happened to Dark Sceptre'?

'I got into computers through a business venture that went badly wrong. I took the computer and ran '

When you think of a computer games programmer, you probably imagine a fanatical whitz-kid, Coke-swigging into the late hours as he develops highly Innovative and exciting games. Such frenzied activities aren't usually associated with retired school teachers – and yet that's exactly what Mike Singleton is.

He stopped teaching in 1980 to enter into a business which happened to involve a computer. But as he says, 'The venture went badly wrong, so I took the computer and ran . . . '

The machine in question was a Commodore PET (there's one on display in the Science Museum), and with it he hoped to produce a few programs to re-establish his diminishing bank balance. The first game was called *Space Ace*, and it occupied a staggering 12K of memory. Written entirely in machine code, it had to be hand-assembled, a memory that still causes Mike to shudder. 'By the end of that I must have known every Op code off by heart', he says bemusedly.

Bank account still firmly in mind, Space Ace was handed over to Petsoft for marketing, and it broke box-office records when it sold around three hundred copies — a very respectable achievement in those days! But Mike's association with Petsoft and Commodore machines was to be short-lived. At the time Petsoft were due to sign an agreement with Sinclair to write software for the Cambridge-besed company's new 'mega-machine' — the ZX80. Mike spent some time messing about with it, eventually getting a tiny machine code program up and running in its 1K of memory.

'Actually, the ZX80 didn't even have 1K's worth of memory', Mike recalls.' Because of all the bits of bobs inside there was only about 750 bytes of memory left to play with!'

Before the agreement details were finalised, a change of mind resulted in Psion securing the software contract with Sinciair, and Petsoft were dropped; a situation which left Mike up the creek without a joystick, so to speak. 'So, I rang Clive – just plain old Clive in those days – and he told me to send my games along. I did, and heard nothing, until one day when I was invited to Cambridge to look at his new project.'

The new project was, In fact, the ZX81. At that stage it was hardly a computer in its own right, merely an Eprom fitted into a ZX80. Mike, along with some other programmers, were all given an Eprom to take away with them so that they could 'Do things with it.'

they could 'Do things with it.'

'Believe it or not', he says with the fondness of remembrance, 'the 81 had even less memory than the ZX80, because it had an extra 32 system variables occupying its memory banks, er, make that bank. I knocked together six BASIC programs which fitted into its miniscule memory and sent them off to Clive.'

The six games became Games Pack Orie.

A happy Consultation; Back Row, left to right: Consult's Dave Kelly, Jane Denning (Melbourne House), Consult's Glenn Benson, Front Row; Mike Singleton, Jo Meads (Melbourne House) and Consult's Dave Sharp.

▼ Doomdark's Revenge

and notched up the kind of sale that today would be the envy of any programmer or software house - some 90,000 copies. Gratify-

ing for Mike's ego, the success was even more welcomed by his bank manager when a cheque for six grand finally arrived.

Mike's next project was Computer Race, a horse racing game, designed to be used in betting shops when the racing was off – a little gallop which was soon stopped by an obscure law. However, the Singleton career continued with a few games on various machines for Postern, a now-defunct Cheltenham-based software house, the most notable probably being Snake Pit.

And then came the big time . . .

"I wanted to create an adventure with the same degree of atmosphere as others, but with graphics which really meant something.

Lords Of Midnight, Mike's epic adventure quest for EMAP's newly launched venture into games software, Beyond, became his next game. He is still very coy when it comes to explaining how he designs a game, and especially those areas where imagination is foremost, preferring to deal in technical topics. When you ask him how he leapt from the arcade simplicities of Snake Pit to the atmospheric sophistication found in Lords Of Midnight, all you get is - 'Ah, that would be telling! Seriously though, I very rarely start with a concept or theme with an intention of working around that. Instead I usually begin with a technique and build a game around it – doing it that way you're sure of getting the guts of a program together first.'

Mike thinks that's where a lot of today's licensing deals on wrong: The programmers.

licensing deals go wrong: 'The programmers have the problem of working a game around a theme and then fitting the technique round it, and, as well you know, that can end in a real

'Landscaping' is Mike's own technique, and

is the one on which his Midnight Trilogy is based. 'When I was considering the game I felt the graphics had to be more relevant to the action. So often the graphics in other adventures appeared purely decorative."

Using Landscaping, a player can actually see his journey in real time, with, in the case of Lords Of Midnight, 32,000 views. From the technique, perhaps, came the theme. Mike wanted to create a massive playing world, so objects like spy satellites were out, because so many view points would be taken away from the landscape below. And so the murky Middle Ages were chosen as the setting, with all the scenes set firmly at eye-level and the landscape features seen from the player's view-

point.
'The Land of Icemark', explains Mike, 'simply came about from the graphic capabilities of the Spectrum. I happened to like the combination of white on blue and so it fitted in rather well.

Having developed his Landscaping technique, the Lords of Midnight game was planned. If plan the game in advance, but should I have a sudden flash of inspiration for an Idea then I can usually find room to slot it in. However, having completed it, Mike saw many ways to further compress his technique and improve the program, improvements which found their way into the next game. Work on Doomdark's Revenge started Immediately afterwards, and although much of it was already planned, Mike re-wrote many of the battle routines in the light of his new thinking. So much for history, Talking about the Midnight Trilogy made us wonder whatever had happened to the third part. See Of The Moon.

happened to the third part, Eye Of The Moon?
'Oh!'m still working on it', Mike exclaims, 'not so much as a project, it's more of a hobby. I've been constructing some new graphic routines so that the Landscaping should be in full colour. Oh, and the map should be about four times the size of Doomdark's.'

But Doomdark's was already pretty vast, isn't he creating a world that's just a bit too big

Roathmon the Dise stands on the Plains of Anvincel Looking Nontheast to the Tower of Thimand.



for one quest? 'There isn't just one quest. The map is divided into 12 realms, and within each realm is a mini-game. This means that Eye can be played quickly, because you can just solve one or two problems, or tackle the whole one or two problems, or tacke the whole game. I think that was one of the faults of Doomdark's — it took too long to get into. Hopefully with the 12 mini-games it should appeal to a much wider audience. With regard to characters, Mike's intending to have even more in the same than before, but

to have even more in the game than before, but this time a player can select a commander and then make up teams of characters which are controlled as a whole rather than individually.

There's no data for completion for Eye Of The Moon, 'It'll be finished when it's good and ready - and it won't be published by Beyond, or Melbourne House for that matter.' So, that leaves one afternative—his own software label, Maeistrom Games.

'Dark Sceptre - oh that, it's nearly finished

Maelstrom was set up to deal with the Play By Mail (PBM) version of *Dark Sceptre*. Are we ever going to see the computer version? Mike says it's nearly linished, which prompts screams of memiment from the assembled members of Consult! 'He's been saying that for years - well, it seems like it', says one

'It is nearly finished,' Mike pleads, 'After all,

I've got you lot working on it.

It becomes apparent that Consult (Dave Kelly, Gienn Benson and Dave Sharp) are hav-ing some problems because they want to keep all the original ideas from the PBM version in the game, and it's proving difficult with only 48K to play with. The PBM Dark Sceptre is still going ahead – but only on Microdrive. Which brings up the question of how many Microdrives are around these days. Offered figures indicate as many as 100,000 units have been sold, but as Mike gets through one Microdrive every year it's dubique that so many are still in use. However, the Spectrum Plus Three with the built in diek drive may come in useful. Mike its built-in disk drive may come in useful. Mike sees it as a possible re-blith for the Spectrum, and looks wistful as he says, 'There's all sorts of things that I could do with it – if I could get my hands on one!

'Can you imagine a game with 16,000 characters, and you've got complete contro! over every one of them?"

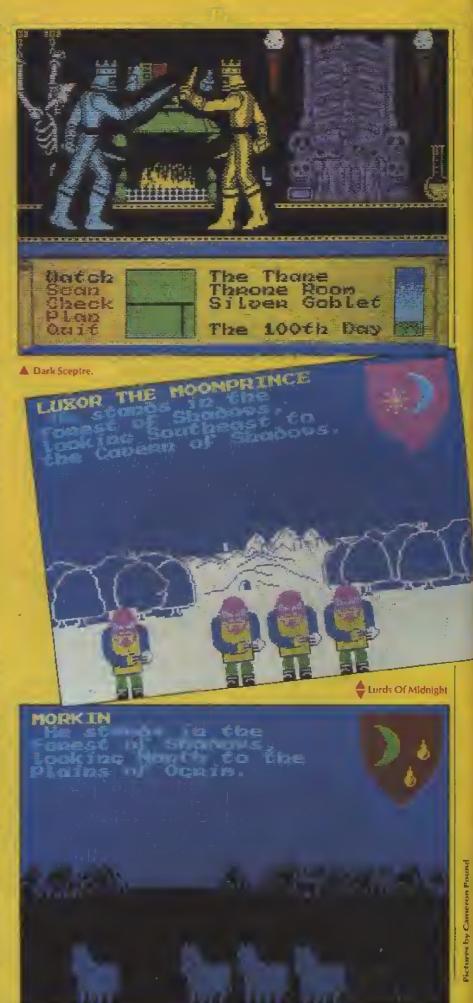
For Melbourne House, Mike Singleton and Consult are working on Lord Of The Rings -The Arcade Game which, unlike the adven-tures, concentrates on the battle scenes. The player should be able to hold sway over the entire map of Middle Earth, and control all the characters and armies to which they belong. Fights take place in real-time but, of course you won't have a constant view of all of the action.

The 3D battles will be displayed in isometric perspective, having characters standing an average 70 pixels high – so there should be about 20 to 30 figures on screen at any one time. 'The control system is a very interesting one', enthuses Mike, 'It's possible to give orders by selecting a character to attack, move, or help another character. And don't worry, a player won't miss out on any of the Righting as characters are controlled directly— all ready to hack the opposition to pieces. There'll be a total of 128 armies, each with a legion of up to 128 men.

'As far as the graphics go, there's quite a bit of freedom. Some may be taken from the film, others from RPG miniatures, but we do have to

work within the Spectrum's Imitations.'
For the future Melbourne House have signed him up to do a few more titles—'One of which,' he says proudly, 'is totally new. Nothing has been done like it before.'

Yes Mike, but how long will we have to wait



Great Thrones Of Fire!

Win a day out at the LONDON DUNGEON Copies of Melbourne House's THRONE OF FIRE to be won!

Deep down in the murky depths of CRASH Towers, there are some places you don't go alone. Old forgotten relics are left down there; Graeme Kidd's Doc Martens (the wears trendy shoes now), Angus Ryall's loo building con-

now), Angus Ryall's loo building con-tract, and other objects of evil counte-nance that us humble comps minions simply dare not cast our eyes upon. But there's one place that makes even a brave comps minion quail at the mention of its name, The London Dungeon. A place of torture, horrific creatures and dark narrow alleyways— a place that you lot would probably

That's why Melbourne House are differing an all-expenses-paid trip to The London Dungeon for the winner (and their friend) of this comp. And should you get too scared you can always hold hands with the gorgeous Jo Meads from Melbourne House or syan scale strongs with bourne House, or swap scary stories with our very own Richard Eddy.

H you're not lucky enough to win the day out, there's 25 copies of the great new Melbourne House game, designed by Mike Singleton, Throne Of Fire (which received 75 percent overall last month). all ready to wing their various ways to the

Can your nerves stand the London Dungeon (or more to the point, can they stand a day with Jo and Ricky)? They can? Well answer the following questions and scribble them onto a postcard or the back of a sealed envelope and post them off to: DRAG ME TO THE DUNGEONS, CRASH TOWERS, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SYS 1DB to arrive no later than June 25th.

- Was Mike Singleton's first game called a) Space Race b) Space Ace

 - c) Horace Goes Water Melon Hunting
- 2. What is the name of the programming team behind Throne Of Fire?
- ton's illegal horse racing game? a) Computer Race
 - b) My Little Pony's Slaughter House c) ZX Horses
- - a) King Atherik b) King Ethlered c) King Grub





SHAO LIN'S ROAD

Here's another, and slightly easier, way of getting on any screen you want from Steven Michael in Eastbourne. Hold down Symbol Shift, m, n, f, t, and 6. Release your fingers from the keys on the desired eareen. screen.

ARMY MOVES

Well lookeee here, our resident man at the keyboards, Paul Sumner, has just found the code to the second part of Army Moves and it is . . . 27351

Hey you! Don't read that, read this: This is the heavy hacking read! One POKE beyond!
Yes folks, Playing Tips are here again, and I think I've just about recovered from last month's massive Special Supplement, but they don't stop coming! However, please do make sure the POKE routines you send are correct because, try as I might, I don't always have the time to check through all of them thoroughly. As it is I have to type them in three times — once from your letters, secondly when I write it up on oi! Harmes and thirdly when it's typeset. So, spare a thought for my sleepless nights.

AUF WIEDERSEHEN MONTY

Infinite lives here from the wonderfully weird Mongee Boswell, a good friend of Dave Thompson I'm told, to help you all say 'Good Riddance Monty' without any nasty sprite collision! Danke Sheffield also discovered this.

Instead of typing LOAD "" at the start type CLEAR 32767, LOAD "" CODE: RANDOMIZE USR 32799 When the game has loaded pick up the first object to the left and wunderbar!



SOUL OF A ROBOT

don't know whether robots have souls, or whether androids dream of electric sheep, but a man's soul is bet-ter for infinite lives and infinite psyche, all of which Is down to the talents of Glann Ragion from Reepham, Norwich

MESGE" In the basic loader

and enter POKE 23788,201. Type RUN and start the tape. The remainder of the game should load in When loaded, type and enter this line:

POKE 25812,255; FOR A = 25816 TO 25843; POKE A + 3, PEEK A, NEXT A, POKE 25816,50 POKE 25817,36, POKE 25818,114; RANDOMIZE USR 25500



MARTIANOIDS

This is what you might call a This is what you might call a small addition to the smashing Ultimate Collection from last month's Supplement—only Martianoids wasn't a Smash. So, here's your cut-out-and-glue-on un\$mashing Ultimate POKE that sends all the aliens packing, as well as providing the droid with 127 glorious lives. From Kilmarnock, it's Steve Snith's hand you need to shake - and also thanks to Robert Strachan who also came up with a similar routine.

MERGE in the loader and enter POKE 46926,127 POKE 42812,0 POKE 42815,0

... before the RANDOMIZE USR statement then load the rest of the

FUTURE KNIGHT EDITOR

Now, here's something I betyou didn't know! Gremlin Graphic's Future Knighthas a built-in editing facility allowing you to con-struct your own screens, Ivan Bristow from Brinkwood disco-vered this little marvel of technology.

The editing keys are:

Q,W,P,L - Cursor directional keys

U - Selects the building block
F - Shifts forward to the next screen
B - shifts back to the previous screen
S - places a block at the cursor's position

BREAK - returns you to the Future Knight game menu.

KRAKOUT

Paul Wells is after my job, hat No chance. But he was kind enough to supply this nifty routine for Gremlin's Krakout. Load the BASIC loader (the screen should turn black). Reset the Spectrum, type and run the listing and start the tape up again - if it works.

10 REM KRAKOUT • 11 REM BY PAUL WELLS • 12 CRASH JUNE 1987 • 20 CLEAR 65270 • 30 LET SUM=0 40 LET INF=61: REM CHANGE TO 0 FOR • INFINITE LIVES 50 LET LEVEL=0: REM CHANGE TO . . . DESIRED LEVEL - 1 60 LET LIVES=2: REM CHANGE TO • DESIRED NUMBER - 1 70 FOR N=65280 TO 65323 ø 80 READ A . ė 90 POKEN,A 100 LET SUM=SUM+A 110 NEXT N 120 LET SUM=SUM-LEVEL-LIVES-INF 136 IF SUM <>360 THEN PRINT "ERROR IN . . DATA":STOP . 140 PRINT "DATA OKAY, START TAPE" e. . 150 RANDOMIZE USR 65280 200 DATA 221, 33, 0, 64, 17, 156, 190, 62 210 DATA 60, 55, 205, 86, 5, 33, 229, 181 220 54, INF, 33, 242, 142, 54, 62, 35 ٠ . 230 DATA 54, LEVEL, 35, 54, 50, 35, 54, 156 • 240 DATA 35, 54, 142, 35, 54, 62, 35, 54 250 DATA LIVES, 195, 168, 139



FEUD

.

•

Hummmm. Odd. The Feud POKEs printed in issue 39 are a mystery to me; they worked fine on my Spectrum and on quite a few other people's, but not on Mark Duffey's Spectrum. He supplied this alternative listing just in case anyone else was having problems.

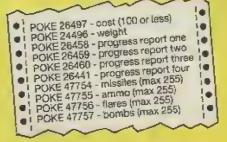
1 REM FEUD 2 REM BY MARK DUFFEY 3 REM CRASH JUNE 1987 10 CLEAR 24716 İø 20 REM CODE 42717, 40818 ø 30 LOAD "" CODE . 40 POKE 47190,201: POKE 44186,0: POKE . 49043,7: POKE 49210,201: RANDOMIZE USR 41653

ILTIFACE ONE

With the growing ranks of Multiface One owners around, I thought it about time I gave you a chance to use the device for entering some very simple POKEs. For information on how to insert them consult the manual, but you shouldn't find it at all difficult!

ACADEMY

From Peter Murray and Steven Atkinson of Hartlepool come these few POKEs which allow you to after the variables within



And all the rest are from Andre Brus, all the way from Holland, and should be entered on title screens rather than when the game is in play.

COBRA

.

Infinite lives POKE 36512,62 POKE 36513,5 POKE 36514.0

XEVIOUS

POKE 53592, n (where n is the number of lives desired)

FIRELORD

Infinite lives: POKE 34509,0

SCOOBY DOO

Infinite lives: POKE 29614,0

CAMELOT WARRIORS

Infinite lives: POKE 53920,33 POKE 53921,6 POKE 53922.0

WRIGGLER

POKE 50173,0

CHUCKIE EGG 11

Infinite lives: POKE 35453,0

LEGEND OF KAGE

POKE 30609, a (where a ls the number of lives desired)

TOP GUN

Infinitellives, one player game only: POKE 26460,0 Chosen number of lives: two player game, where n is the number desired: POKE 27727,n POKE 27728,n

WEST BANK

POKE 51210, n.

FANTASTIC VOYAGE

Infinite lives POKE 54492,0

IMPOSSABALL

Infinite lives: POKE 41185,0



SABOTEUR II

Yes, I know it is reviewed in this Yos, 1 know it is reviewed in this issue (something wrong with the postal service perhaps?) but as the game's been available for a while, here's the solution to level one from Jenathon "Ninja" Hodgsen from Billingham. Thanks also go to Colin Campbell from Glasgow and Scott Sinclair from Winchester, who all provided tips.

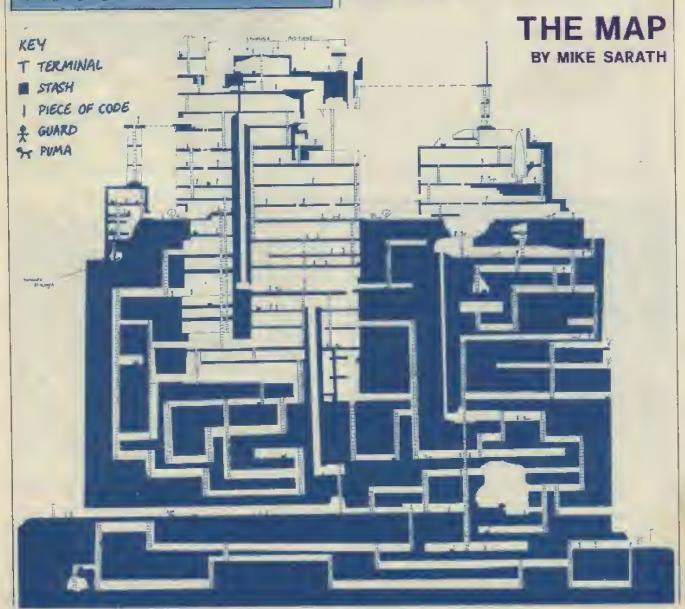
Jump off the hang-glider as soon as you start and slowly walk right. Or p down onto the platform with the tight-rope and walk right to the end of it. And then. Down, down, loft, down steps, left, slowly off the edge, into room, up, right, up until the tadder is reached, up until you come to the weapons base, get punched tapes, right, right, right, down,

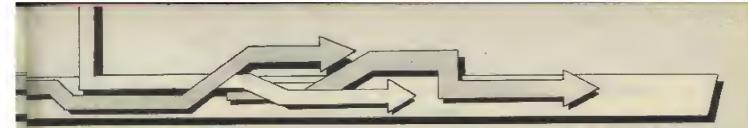
nght, use computer, left, left, left down, left, down, right, down all the way, down steps, right, down, move lift up with terminal, left, anto lift, move lift down, nght, down, down, left to ladders, all the way down, get weapons if necessary, left, left, up, up, right, move lift up with terminal, left, left onto lift, move lift down, right, down, down, get onto bike and escapel

And here's some level codes from Darren Dodds who hails from Whitburn in Sunderland. from Whitburn in Sunderland
Mission 1 press ENTER
Mission 2 type JONIN
Mission 3 type KIME
Mission 3 type KUJI KIRI
Mission 5 type SAIMENJITSU
Mission 6 type GENIN
Mission 7 type MI LU KATA
Mission 8 type DIM MAK



SABOTEUR II





NETHER EARTH

Here's the complete solution for the Argus game which we reviewed last issue. It comes from Andrew Lewis who lives in Edinburgh. He completed the game on 8 April and claims to be the first person to do so. That is unless you know different . . . (As Esther Rantzen would say)

- ➡ Make one Antigrav plus cannon, and one track plus cannon. Advance Antigrav 30 miles, and capture the phaser and the nuclear factory. Order trailed vehicle to capture neutral factories, then work the Antigrav back. You should now have one factory of every kind. Install your two machines in the Irent two factories, with orders to slop and defend.
- Return to your warbase and make as many trailed vehicles with missifes or phasers, and an electric module, because you can send them to the front positions and park defensively; again with orders to stop and defend.
- Make an Antigrav vehicle with phasers, missiles, carnions and an electric module. This is the strongest type of vehicle and can withstand five shots from a phaser before being destroyed. Always put an electric module on vehicles as it adds range and strengthens its armour. Place this vehicle in

'Why bother typing in the massive Highlander issting from Issue 39, when you can use my simple cheat,' crows Richard Hurst from Sale in Cheshire. So c'mon tell us what it is

Kneel down and keep performing a high block, so that when the opponent hits you it's

his energy that decreases, not

HIGHLANDER

your phaser factory, and from this position you can destroy any enemy within range. Stay with this vehicle for about 100 days and repulse any enemy attacks. This may appear being but it's really worth it.

- You should now have many resource points. Return to the warbase and make as many vehicles, as described above. Order them to destroy enemy robots.
- Keep the offensive up, and help vehicles to destroy troublesome enemies. Return once more to warbase and make as many track vehicles as possible, assigning them to capture enemy factories. Remember, enemies can be destroyed by using your radar—this where missiles are most bandy.
- When one of your vehicles draws near to an enemy warbase, put it under combat control and capture that warbase.
- ➡ You may find that your vehicles get stuck in a small channel near the third warbase. Should this be the case, take an Antigrav unit with a nuclear device and blow the blocks out of the way—remember to pull your vehicles well out of blasting range.
- Repeat the sixth point to finish the game.

KAT TRAP

Bit of a cock up here I'm afraid. A line of the Kat Trap routine was missed from the listing In Issue 39. Anthony Beardsmore pointed it out and supplied the correction. Just add the extra line....
90 RANDOMIZE USR 57344

ENDURO RACER

Following the Smashing review of Enduro Racer loads of people wrote in with the same tip. So, take a deep breath as I thank the following:

Richard Jenkins, Featherstone; The Shaff Hackers, Shaffield; Garry Dark, Gosport; Jeff Talbot, Weybridge; Mark Freeman and Lewis Peacock, Twyford; Garmet Wragg, Huddersfield; David Offor, Staines; Nigel Jones, Kidderminister; Gary Henderson, Whitfield; Stefan Langford-Rose, Dalston; Peul Robertson, Gerdenhall; David Johnson, Scunthorpe; Steven Wood, Filey; Paul Mürray, Hartlepool; John Chan, Swindon; Stuart and Paul Backhouse, Steephill Cove; Paul Bryson, Glasgow; James Oglesby, Cottingham; John Cripps, Chorleywood; Justin Bunkett; Andrew Woods, Thomhill; Clive and Martin Stonebridge; Dave Clements and Michael Brown, Bristol.

Anyway, this is what they discovered – once the game's started press forwards, Caps Shift and A at the same time and you're whisked through the first three levels. You're on your own through level four, but the tip to complete level five is to go behind the palm trees and keep the throttle full on and the game should be completed. Now why didn't I think of that?

CURSE OF SHERWOOD

Al and Rick from Pirton in Hertfordshire would have been popular with the Midlands Saxons of old. They've come up with a hacking method for ridding Sherwood Forest of the opposition, and one which also makes you immune to their Norman weapons.

Firstly, MERGE" In the loader and delete line 10. Type CLEAR 23999 and load in the rest of the code with LOAD" CODE. Then, type these POKEs in directly:

POKE 58370,0 POKE 58395,0 POKE 58704.0

followed by:

BORDER 0; RANDOMIZE USR 35073

and finally enter:

POKE 58370,0 POKE 58704,0 POKE 58703,100 POKE 58703,100 POKE 58395,0 POKE 58379,100 POKE 58385,0 POKE 58705,0

And some clues . .

- The scroll with the map is not needed.

 The shield is not needed.
- The club smashes down the door through the teleport.

 The ice wand freezes the
- The ice wand freezes the river making it possible to walk across.

SPACE HARRIER

Good Stuff.

VOLITS!

Here's a wee bit o' blamey from Clive Kelly in Ireland to make all trainee Space Harriers invincible. Just select the keys as normal and when you return to the main menu type CHEAT3FB69 and, hey presto, the game starts on its own with you, like I said, Invincible.

NEMESIS

Simpler than last month's hack, just MERGE in the loader and enter 56 POKE 51479, 1 and you're indestructible, thanks to David Stevens from Swindon.

The second in a series . . .

THE GOLDEN OLDIE COLLECTION

vet another table of classics . . .

POKE TITLE 48825,255 ZAXXON **ARCADIA** 25776.0 **MOONALERT** 42404,255 46998,0 SABOTEUR SABOTEUR 29894 0 FINDERS KEEPERS 34252,0 SAICOMBAT 65364.201:32421.1 33219,0 SWEEVO'S WORLD FRANK N STEIN 34124.0 **HUNCH BACK** 26888.0 44416.5 PI-BALLED **BIRDS AND THE BEES** 37852,255 JACK AND THE BEANSTALK 56110.0

Compiled by Tim Bratton, Steyning, and Michael Smith, Morley.

RESULT
INFINITE LIVES
INFINITE LIVES
100 LIVES
STOPS THE CLOCK
INFINITE LIVES
INFINITE LIVES
INFINITE LIVES
INFINITE LIVES
INFINITE LIVES



BOOK WORLD 45 rooms HEAD OVER HEELS

> MOONBASE HQ 18 rooms

MAINBASE II 7 rooms

PENITENTIARY 35 rooms

MARKET

BLACKTOOTH II

CRASH June 1987

CASTLE BLACKTOOTH 70 rooms



HEAD OVER HEELS

When I came in this morning, my When I came in this morning, my fingers were pretty sore from pruning the roses, but by the time I'd finished typing in this pext solution, they were pouring

Anyway, Wayne Pester from Newport Pagnell was the first one to come up with the solution, although many set in tips. Wayne, your £20 software voucher for top-tipster of the month is winging its way to you now. The directions indicate the route around the locations and not how to solve each particular puzzle, and make more sense when used in conjunction with programmer Jon Ritman's map.

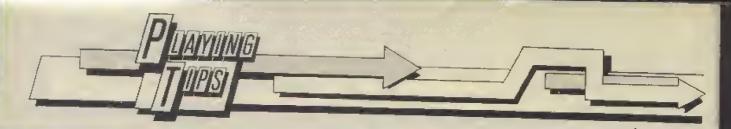
Use teleport, left, down through floor, left, top exit, doughnuts, bottom exit, fight, top exit, right, right, right, top exit, top exit, top exit, right, right, down through floor, bottom exit, go through ceiling, right, bottom exit, bag, top exit, right, go through ceiling, bottom exit, right, right, right, right, top exit, right, right, down through floor, top exit, top exit, top exit, right, right, right, top exit, top exit, right, right, right, down through floor, top exit, right, right, down through floor, top exit, right, right, down through right, right, top exit, top exit, right, right, right, down through

floor, split up, control Head, bottom exit, bottom exit, use teleport, top exit, right, control Heats, right, right, right, bottom exit, top exit, left, join up, top exit, left, use teleport, split up, control heats, right, right, go through ceiling, go through ceiling, go through ceiling, go through ceiling, right, top exit, top exit, control heabottom exit, right, top exit, top exit, control heabottom exit, right, top exit, top exit, go through ceiling, and through ceiling, right, hottom exit, get to other end of room and control pnly Head, bottom

exit, bottom exit, down through floor, down through floor, left, left, control Heels, bottom exit, left, use teleport, jump along platform, top exit, use teleport, grown.

John up, right, use teleport, left, use teleport, right, right, use teleport, right, right, use teleport, right, right, splin up, control Heels, top exit, top exit, top exit, top exit, top exit, top exit, fop exit, fight, right, right, right, right, right, top exit, down through floor, right, cover.

crown. Left, top ext, use teleport, use teleport, left, top exit, right, use



lelepart, split up, control Heels, top exit, control Head, top exit, point up, top exit, teft, go through ceiling, top exit, teft, go through ceiling, top exit, control Head, right, top exit, top exit, top exit, right, go through ceiling, go through ceiling, top exit, point up, top exit, right, fight, bottom exit, bottom exit, fight, hottom exit, down through floor, top tom exit, down through floor, top exit, go through ceiling, go through ceiling, top exit, top exit, top exit, crown.

Bottom exit, use teleport, bottom exit, bottom exit, use teleport, bottom exit, use teleport.

Bottom exit, use teleport, bottom exit, bottom exit, battom exit,
use teleport, left, left, use teleport,
splil up, control Heeis, left, left,
bottom exit, bottom exit, bottom
exit, bottom exit, bottom
exit, bottom exit, bottom
exit, bottom exit, bottom
exit, bottom exit, bottom
exit, bottom exit, bottom
up, right, bottom exit, bottom
exit, left, left, left, top exit,

doughnuts, splitup, control Heets, bottom exit, left, left, feft, control Head, top exit, top exit, top exit. rieda, top exit, top exit, top exit, teft, left, left, left, go. through calling, bottom exit, bottom exit, bottom exit, bottom exit, down through floor, join up. bottom exit, bottom exit, adwin through floor, down through floor, down through floor, nght, errore.

crawn.
Left, go through ceiling, use teleport, use teleport, right, top exit, top exit, split up, control Heals, right, top exit, use teleport, right, use teleport, right, bottom exit, right, use teleport, top exit, control Head, leit, top exit, use teleport, right, right, bottom exit, poin up, right, right, bottom exit, poin up, right, right, bottom exit, left, left, crown.
Right, right, top exit, top exit, top exit, qght, bottom exit, right, right, top exit, get to other end of room, split up, control Heels, top exit, do not use teleport yet, control Head top exit, Jon up, teleport to complete the game.

STARGLIDER MISSIONS

When you wish upon a star. doesn't matter who you are, when you wish upon a star the missions come from afar. Eat your heart out Walt Disney, Fol-lowing the epic quest for Starglider tips, here comes some help for missions two, three and four from Mick (Professor Dude) Garlick from Lowestoft

LEVEL TWO MISSIONS:

Pick up Super Missile - This is an enhanced weapon with a much longer range than normal missiles One can be carried in addition to the two other missiles. It doesn't appear to be any more powerful

Destroy Ergon Battle Crawler — This is a particularly nasty piece of machinery, which resembles a mobile green tri-launcher with a flapping lid. Once you set off on the mission there's a time limit within which you are to destroy the EBC before it destroys one of your bases. The easiest way to destroy one is by circining round behind, and flying up to it at ground level, before hitting it with a missile. Destroy Ergon Battle Crawler -

You're not guaranteed to get a missile when you dock for this mission, and there isn't time to fly to another base for one, so from level two onwards it's worth keeping a missile handy just in case.

LEVEL THREE MISSION:

Destroy Ergon Command Centre - The Ergons now start building bases of their own in the shape of a cube surrounded by shape of a cube surrounded by four towers. These pump out homing missiles as you approach. Best method for their destruction is to fly out at a fair speed and at ground level with the fasers constantly firing. Release the missile just as you are about to hit the base – any sooner and it may be destroyed by one of the homina missiles. one of the homing missiles.

LEVEL FOUR MISSION:

Destroy Ergon Ammunition Dump - This looks like a large 3D starset into the ground. It behaves in roughly the same way as the command centres and fires homing missiles as you come in. The proceedure for destroying this is the same as that for the Ergon command centres

And now the revenge of ...

THE HAXBY HACKERS

You just can't keep those boys down, and who would want to? I love them (to a point...). The El Supremeos of POKEing have come up with two amazing routines this month. There's little to addexcept sit back, type them in and enjoy infinite entertainment from the top tipsters

Oh, and Derrick, Richard says that a bit of bombardment never hurt anyone!

AMAUROTE

Infinite lives

10 REM AMAUROTE 20 REM BY THE HAXBY HACKERS 30 CRASH JUNE 1987 Oi. 40 CLEAR 26590 . 50 POKE 23739,82 . 60 POKE 23740,0 70 LOAD""CODE 16384 -1 80 LOAD""CODE 90 POKE 46248,201

100 RANDOMIZE USR 26600

STAR RUNNER

Infinite time

10 REM STAR RUNNER . 20 REM HAXBY HACKERS . 30 REM CRASH JUNE 1987 ٠ 40 LOAD" "CODE 16384 . 50 LET HAXPOC=2:LET TOT=0 60 PAPER 0: INK 0: BORDER 0: CLS • 70 FOR F=23310 TO 23321 . 80 READ A: POKE F,A 90 LET TOT = TOT + HAXPOC - A 100 LET HAXPOC=HAXPOC+1 . ė 110 NEXT F 120 IF TOT <> 11306 THEN PRINT "ERROR øi 0 IN DATA"

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140 RANDOMIZE USR 23296 150 DATA 205, 86, 5, 62 4 160 DATA 0, 50, 140, 193 ø: 170 DATA 50, 152, 193, 193, 201

And that's it for another month. Thank you for all your help, and sorry for the many tipsters who didn't see their names in print. I was surprised by the amount of entries to our mapping competition in Issue 39. The winner is picked (he's an adventure cartographer), but many of the runners up look likely candidates for my further requests, so keep those tidy pens at work. The address for playing tips, POKEs, maps and cheats various is, PLAYING TIPS, CRASH, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SYB 108, Fill be back next month with more and more of the same.

GREYFELL The Legend of Norman



An Epic Arcade Adventure that takes you into the realms of Fantasy. Guide Norman through untold perils in the land of GREYFELL on his Quest for the Orb of Life.

"Creyfell is quite simply the cat's whiskers!"



"The screens are superbly drawn, pleasing to the eye and offer one of the best views of 3D I've seen"

Watch out for two great new releases from STARLIGHT.

DEATHSCAPE and DOGFIGHT 2187 COMING TO YOUR LOCAL RETAILER on Spectrum, CBM & Amstrad.

CSA 128 19:30 CHAT 25 (THE 212.00 AMSTRAD CHICKE OF AMSTRAD CLICK CLASS SPECIFICAL CO. US



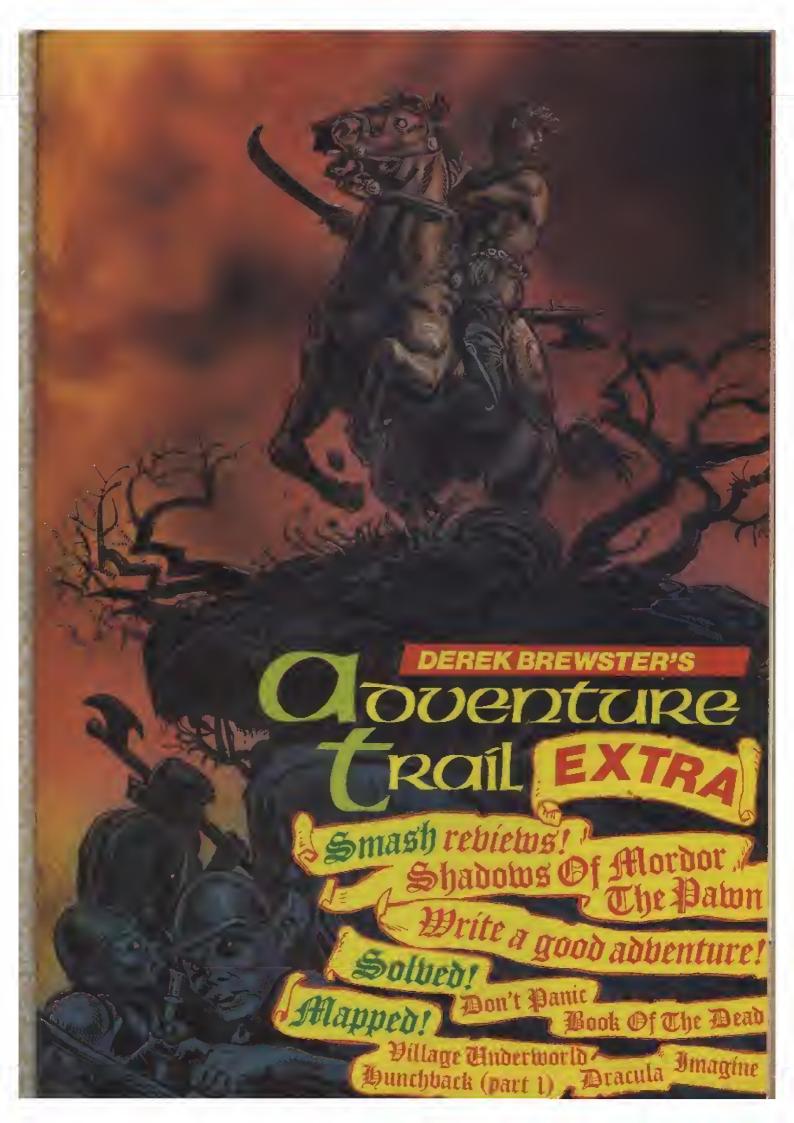


SHADOWS OF MORDOR

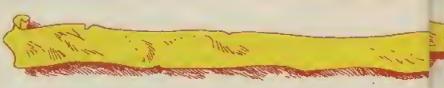
GAME TWO OF LORD OF THE RINGS'

MELBOURHE HOUSE

AVAILABLE FOR: AMSTRAD CPC, CBM CASSETTE £8.95 - SPECTRUM £7.95 - CBM DISK £14.95







GREAT **ADVENTURING MOMENTS** -1984

Back in 1984 CRASH took its first faltering steps along the start of The Adventure Trail. That year saw the release of many adventures whose lastability might surprise those who think all old games are long dead and gone (especially arcade players used to short shelf life games). Here I point the connoisseur of old (but good) games back to the Summer of '84 where we begin our look at the Famous Five.

FANTASIA DIAMOND

Hewson Consultants

Reviewed way back in June of 84, this illustrated adventure had a tremendous amount going for it. Independent characters, real time, cursor key option on movement, weakness as an added characteristic to bring realism to

the concept of fatigue, user-friendly vocabulary going beyond verb/noun with LOOK AT distinguishable from LOOK INTO, and even LOOK ACROSS into adjacent locations to see signs of impending danger. All of these served to made this an adventure with a difference

SNOWBALL

A classic Level 9 text-only game with the long, carefully-crafted atmospheric location descripatmospheric location descrip-tions and detailed, informative examine reports which have since become their hallmark. The storyline still looks interesting, and the Snowball spacecraft is still a wonder to explore.

THE KET TRILOGY

The Mountains of Ket started it all, followed by Temples of Vran with atmospheric location passages, a combat routine, along with wellrounded, interesting problems. The Final Mission, reviewed in November, added neatly boxedin location descriptions, onscreen score, a tune on entering locations for the first time, and a strong examine command. Incentive's text-only threesome still looks good.

THE HOBBIT

Melbourne House

This is a most timely recommendation as The Hobbit book celebrates its fiftieth birthday this year, having been published way back in 1937. The eponymous computer game joined the super league the moment it was released due to its independent characters and comely text and pictures. Its problems are fascinating, which may go some way to explaining the fact that it does not seem to have aged here in 1987.

LORDS OF MIDNIGHT

Beyond

You're definitely missing out if you haven't seen this one. Adventure Trail was one of the first to publish a review, but the success it went on to achieve was all its own work, as it was the first game to show what the humble Spectrum could really do given an original idea. Many considered Mike Singleton, the game's author, a genius.

THE PAWN

Producer: Rainbird Price: £14.95 Authors: Magnetic Scrolls



he Pawn will already be known to many, as it has been doing well on the larger computers (in-cluding the QL and the

Atari ST). However, it looked like there was little chance of it filtering its way down to the smaller home micros. Well, before we've even had time to think about The Pawn and anticipate it, here it is on the 128K Spectrum, albeit without the graphics which have so prettily decorated its reviews for other computers. Text-only on the 128, The Pawn still provides all the entertainment of its sister

Unless you've been an adventuring ostrich, you'll already know that The Pawn has received many accolades. Opening up the typically glossy Rainbird package quite a jumble of parts comes lumbling out. The largest, most glossy booklet is the novella, A Tale of Kerovnia by G Sinclair, which shows a map of Kerovnia on its back cover and includes a cypheric help section towards the end. This set of numbers and letters, when typed into the com-puter after the input HINT, is digested by the program itself and are regurgitated as plain English. phrases. As the number of letter and number combinations are



long in order to answer such questions as How Do I Cross the Red Line? and How Do I Drop the Wristband?, the instructions give you two examples to try your hand which I can reveal bring up these two comments: 'Congratulations' and 'one two, one two, testing'. Also in the package are two smaller booklets, one a general guide to gameplay and the other a more specific set of notes directed at the 128K Spectrum. To complete the pack is a good poster displaying the picture featured on the novella cover,

The screen layout, being full of lext, is necessarily restricted in the ways in can offer diversions from a large sheet of words, but the program has made some attempts to provide interest. The top contains a band which bears the name of the current location, along with your score and the number of locations visited (you'll

know which is which, as one of these figures increases rather more easily than the other!). What's below is light-coloured, superbly redesigned and readable text against a dark background. Cleverly, the program allows the intensity of the text colour to be raised or lowered by just pressing the GRAPH key, so you can keep the text readable as light conditions falling upon the screen vary (perhaps midday to midnight with a game as involved as this!). The GRAPH key is listed, along with some others which greatly assist editing your input during play. Apart from the usual delete one character to the left key (DELETE) you can also employ the left and right arrows to move through the text, the up and down arrows to jump one word left or right through the text, or delete one word to either left or right with TRUE VIDEO and INV VIDEO. Were this not enough, EDIT pulls down your last entry after the program has acknowledged it and found it wanting. These features, along with the 42 character lines (giving an almost word processor neatness to the display) and the up to two-and-a-half line input lengths, give the game a feel far removed from the old Spectrum fonts and faces.

The storyline and gameplay are truly enthralling, although you might take its boast of accepting everything you input lightly, as on many occasions the parser seems to ignore the second logical part of a long construction.

The story concerns a King Erik

whose popularity has slid in the polls due to his condoning the banishment of the Roobikyoub dwarfs. The puzzle of the Roobikyoub lies in their supposed assassination of Queen Jendah II and their vital economic importance as they produced the smoothest, strongest malf whisky. Now the economy is literally depressed, with the gap in the drinks market filled by the Farthington Real Ale Company and the spring water-bottling Romni gnomes, interest groups who gnomes, interest groups who have no desire to see Roobikyoub in any new alignment (groan!), But people still hanker for the old

whisky.
Play is fully explained in the booklet in a tashion which indeed, as the programmers hoped, goes a long way to enticing new adventurers to the game while still retaining the respect of old hands. The number of variations to achieve even a simple task are great as in LEAVE SHOP, where you can enter just that ors-GO SOUTH, S, GO S, OUT, O, EXIT, EXIT SHOP, or EXIT SOUTH. Similarly, the rather more complicated area of picking up items in a crowded location allows the likes of GET ALL FROM THE SCHOOL BAG EXCEPT THE ERASER or GET ALL EXCEPT THE CASES BUT NOT THE VIOLIN CASE which if you follow the logic, actually means you will get the violin case along with all the objects except the other cases) More impressive still, the instructions weigh in with KILL THE MAN EATING SHREW WITH

THE CONTENTS OF THE VIOLIN CASE (a sentence which is even ambiguous in plain English!) and REMOVE THE SHREW'S TAIL, an example of possessive construction I can't remember seeing before in an adventure (SYMB SHIFT and 7 brings up the raised apostrophe). AND, THEN, punc-tuation and IT are catered for as well but rounding off the vocabulary with another impressive feature is the intelligent way the prog-ram deals with input as when it asks a question to clarify the player's aims. For example, when dropping a hat the program might wonder which one should you be carrying two. Many programs inquire 'Which hat?' or 'Which one?', but this program not only is more specific with the query (say, Which hat, the small hat or the spotted hat?") but also allows the player to just quickly type in which hat without the need to repeat the initial input. Friendly indeed, mighty friendly

Cetting quite a way into the adventure there are some areas which suggest some largess on the part of the instructions. I have already mentioned the occasional relapse by the program when it chooses to ignore the second part of a complex sentence. The examine command (where, like most words, EXAMINE must be spelled out fully, along with long words such as floorboards) can helpful, as in EXAMINE VEL. The gravel is small GRAVEL. pieces of black stone', can miss entirely as with 'What black stones?', or give a reply which may or may not be comical, 'The arms are quite long for the time of year.' It's worth noting here that EXAMINE and LOOK IN are sublly different commands, bringing about fundamental changes in your fortunes should you learn how to use them properly. On another occasion you are told how you cannot see a tree when you are in a forest while, despite

the instructions boasting many weird and wonderful adjective recognitions, the program does not comprehend LOOSE in the command EXAMINE LOOSE FLOORBOARD, Let's stay with this one to lead me into one or two misgivings I have with the plot. EXAMINE FLOORBOARD replies 'large and very solid' yet levering the board with the hoe achieves nothing but doing some-thing a lot simpler gets the result. However, more worrying in terms of a credible plot is the pouch which doesn't seem to exist until you have fetched the guru his water, an act totally unconcerned the appearance of the pouch. Such inconsistencies pull the plot into an evertightening feel of linearity,

The Pawn is a major addition to the Spectrum game player's library of fine games, adventure it is a most traditional fantasy affair with fewer unusual additions than you might expect, making little effort to probe new problems or find original solu-tions. No-one could be blamed for looking enviously at the superlative pictures seen on the Atari ST version (as on the box) but this text-only Spectrum game is still a fascinating trip into the imagination where all avid adventurers, fresh-faced or wizened, long to

Difficulty: not difficult Graphics: none

complex adventuring

Overall

Presentation: neat character set, adjustable text intensity

Input facility: complex sentences Response: fast General rating: really engaging,

Atmosphere 95% Vocabulary 90% Logic 87% Addictive quality 92%

90%

SHADOWS OF MORDOR

Producer: Melbourne House

Price: £7.95 Author: Beam Software

biggest software releases in adventure gaming are those based on the works of JRR Tol-

kien, for their source material is derived from the greatest set of fantasy books ever writ-

The Hobbit told the story of Bilbo Baggins and how he was unwittingly thrown into the world of darkness and danger far from the cosy tunnel he had known in Hobbiton, Bilbo eventually began to enjoy his exotic sojourns, along with the treasures and skills he had amassed, and this enthusiasm for adventure, peculiar among home-loving Hobbits, transferred itself to his young and impressionable cousin, Frodo. The Lord of the Rings trilogy of books tells Frodo's story, and this game being the secand computer instalment, it follows the theme of the second book, The Two Towers.

The computer game is titled Shadows of Mordor which probably reflects the adventure's desire not to be thought a rerun of the book, but a game more loosely based on that work and only keeping to the essential atmos-phere of Middle Earth. They take another chance to distance themselves from the awe-inspiring and critical task of transposing Tolkien's masterpiece to the micro-



computer in the style of the instructions, which have taken on a whimsical and self-deprecatory air. Have a look at this line from the introduction: 'The Shadows of Mordor is a brilliant piece of fantasy software thanks to the reworking of many of the game's systems by a highly trained team of idiats'

If the intention is to show the

reader that this adventure is, after all, only a game, they can rest assured this style certainly lowers expectations.

Although there are instances of idiocy to be found, let's not dwell



game

Gameplay is similar to Lord of the Rings Part One, perhaps too similar for those who weren't altogether struck by that prog-ram's performance. The programming team saw in that first game advantages in offering complex character interaction and vocabulary handling. Here the characters again are marvellously independent with their own personalities, strengths allegiances. These characteristics may well influence the kind of response you achieve when conversing with your colleagues and acquaintances using the important SAY TO (GANDALF) con-struction. The two examples given go sonte way to indicating the possibilities of interacting with the chief players in the plot TO SAM 'KILL THE ORC WITH THE SWORD' and SAY TO SMEAGOL 'TAKE THE GOLD FROM THE ORC' (Smeagol is a

here and instead consider the

many fine aspects to this great





DEREKBREWSTER'S

creature, who like Thorin in The Hobbit, seems to be the total imbecile, forever sneaking off and returning from the bushes). With Sam, you can choose to have him controlled automatically by the computer, in which case he can be asked to perform specific actions by way of the SAY TO SAM construction. Alternatively you can take a more active role by BECOMEing SAM, (note the full stop), which may be of more use when the Hobbits go their separate ways. As with LOR Part One, you must take up this option at the very start of the game, but unlike that first adventure, there appears to be only the two Hobbits available for this scheme, as opposed to the four (Merry and Pippin were the others) in the first game, This necessarily changes the look of the adventure with the layers of pages effect gone, leaving just a band across the top bearing either the name of Sam or Frodo (the default character). default character).

Vocabulary handling always been a strong point to the big Melbourne House games. Here there's an 800-word vocab-ulary of loglish, the English subset first seen in *The Hobbit*. Adjectives and prepositions are dealt with as efficiently as the verbs and nouns which form the basis of all mainstream adventure communication. Punctuation and the word AND can allow many instructions to be strung together, and this game boasts the opportunity for



the player to give a character a string of commands to act upon immediately. ALL allows action to affect everyone, including your own character, so KILL ALL should be tempered with ALL should be tempered with BUT FRODO unless things are going particularly badly!

Due to the complexity of the vocabulary your input may have to become quite specific in order to achieve the desired result. In a game which seems to have someassumes north. In another case the program selects a small sword a task for which it is most unsuited given no alternative specific instructions by the player on which item to employ.

Beam Software have again penned this game, and it has got to be said that the face this adventure presents to the player isn't that tidy. When you consider the lengths even small software concerns are going to in order to improve colouring and readability of the screen, Beam might be said to be a little Luddite in their attitudes. Thankfully, the classic rounded, compact print famous from The Hobbit is retained (probably the prettiest character set ever to grace the Spectrum screen) and your input is tidily tucked away at the bottom in dis-

tinctive capitals, but above is a stark whiteness punctuated by an untidily-scrolling list of happenings. Technically, the game is very slow, with pregnant pauses imposed after just about every decision. And on the bug front, the extremely colourful graphics on the 128K (at least on the copy I was sent) are too fast even to form subliminal images. They're on and off in a literal flash

The two major concerns (or shocks) from Part One are still shocks) from Part One are still here. The strange non-loading appearance to the loading sequence is retained, as is the need to repeatedly save, because a QUIT or a death regulres the whole program to be loaded in again, not something one relishes with a 128K program, It might be worth mentioning here that the 48K version does not have sufficient memory to support graphics.

Shadows of Mordor looks a very interesting game. The test of any game is how easily it entertains and I've got to say I really enjoyed reviewing this Mel-bourne House classic.

Difficulty: no pushover Graphics: attractive Presentation: average Input facility: complex sentences Response: slow General rating: a big game

Almosphere	94%
Vocabulary	90%
Logic	91%
Addictive quality	95%
Overall	93%



SHIPWRECK/CASTLE EERIE

Producer: Tartan Price: £2.95 Author: Tartan

Č

here's something about the names of these two programs, sold by mail order on one cassette, which suggests a certain

iamiliarity even before you load up. To borrow a Monty Pythonism, they're good 'woody' words in the sphere of adventure game names. As It turns out, it isn't just the names that have a familiar ring to them — the programs have a look similar to Subsunk, or Seabase Delta, or both!

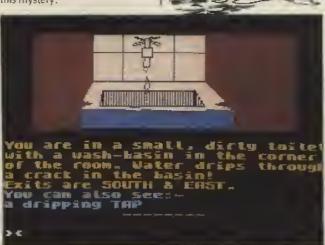
Given the success of those programs, and the ever-popularity of the themes of shipwreck and eerle castles, I could quite go along with those who think these programs are rather good. The graphics, as ever, are simple, but they aren't so crude as to be irritating (in fact they are very similar in style to Seabase Delta). The character set is distinctive and chunky and rates very highly on the readability scale. The beep which accompanies ENTER is also particularly reminiscent of Seabase Delta.

The story sets you up on the ship (you're taking a well-earned holiday) and dumps you off on an island (there is a fire down below and you are forced to abandon ship). Wandering around the ship is much as you'd expect, with the port on your left and the sherry on your right, and all things shipshape and nautical. There's a certain symmetry to this shipshapedness, with parallel decks running the length of the vessel separated by distractions such as a shop, writing room, cardroom, bar and writing room, cardioon, bar bathing pool. A lifeboat and lifebelts are an early Insight into your predicament, but for now you concern yourself with getting past the steward who bars the way to the lounge, gaining access to the bridge (for which you need a permit), and how to buy things in the shop and elsewhere when your character doesn't seem to have any spending money.

One aspect of this game which worries me a little is its insistence on rather specific solutions to certain problems. Most especially in the tight spots, I think the program could have allowed a greater number of word options without which many of the problems are going to have people really stumped. Anyway, on to the flip side to see If it is as much fun.

As with Shipwreck, Castle Eerle puts up the instructions on screen first, with a timely siren to warn you to stop the tape. In this game you play Charlie Jones, an extraspecial agent working for a secret

government department dealing with unsolved mysteries. You are certified, to carry a gun that is, and your assignment has you travelling to investigate a mysterious castle on the north Scottish coast. The castle should have been empty ever since the owner died in an odd manner some years ago, but dimly-lit figures have been seen at the windows at night, and strange sounds have been heard coming from the castle. Any who have been foolish enough to investigate in the past have never returned, so it is with some trepidation that you try to round up those responsible for this mystery.



The taps atways drip in Castle Serie . . .

Following a rather good loading screen, you begin with a torch, a gun, but only one bullet as you have absent-mindedly left your ammunition behind. The opening picture has some atmosphere about it, showing the gateway to the castle with the shading used to enforce the image of light thrown from one side. Trying to enter the castle reveals the obvious ('The door's closed!'), so the only direction left open to you is west to a rather broken-down but. This then leads onto quite a number of locations which have one or two items apiece, once again very similar to *Shipwreck*. Some Items are Immediately accessible, while others can't even be examined.

Once settled into the run of things you discover some nice touches. Picking up the ladder, you quite rightly find out you can't just cart it everywhere, whilst on a more frivolous theme, flashing lights and creaking door sounds keep the senses amused. As with Shipwreck, there are times when the vocabulary needs to be very specific, but given that the solu-

tions, once found, are logical, this isn't such a damning criticism.

Shipwreck and Castle Eerie are

Shipwreck and Castle Eerie are rather entertaining adventures. They look smart and have engaging themes. I particularly liked Castle Eerie, whose problems are especially fun to solve, Programs for both amateur and wizened adventurers alike. Tartan Software can be contacted at 61 Bailif Norrif Crescent, Montrose, Angus DD10 9DT.

Difficulty: no brick walls, but the vocabulary can be exacting Graphics: vary, but some aren't too bad at all Presentation: very attractive, clean cut look Input facility: verb/noun Response: Quill (very fast), graphics slower General rating: good

Atmosphere 79% Vocabulary 71% Logic 88% Addictive quality 87% Overall 82%

DON'T PANIC – PANIC NOW

Producer: Dented Designs Price: £3.99 Authors: A Sanders, H Church, M Eacrett



omewhere in the backwaters of space lies a blue-green planet whose inhabitants are so utterly primitive that they still

think the C5 is a pretty neat idea . . . So starts a game whose humorous inspiration becomes quite clear when names such as Arfur Bent and Ford Escort roam around a Vulgar belching star cruiser with the aid of a Burble fish hearing device. Consider further the programming teams' name, a reworking of Denton Designs, and you have what looks like, and indeed is, a saure in the mould of Fergus McNeil (cited here as one Fungus McNaill). The point is that Fergus McNeil's satires deal with Tolkien and other 'straight' fantasy works, whereas Dented attempt to satirise an already deeply whimsical set of books (Douglas Adams' Hitchiker's Guides). You can't help wondering how much of this software's charm lies in its simply purloining the best parts of the Hitchiker's Series, and how much on the new extra dash of humour spread on top

Arfur Bent's day starts much as you'd expect – nursing a hang-over in bed, surrounded by countless empty bottles. The picture showing him snoozing in his bedroom is slowly drawn, but as with many in the three parts which make up this adventure, has a certain cartoon-like charm which in some way matches its overriding simplicity. You can collect up all the bottles and examine them (the bottles had previously held dou-ble-strength Scotch Whiskey), this ability to examine things being rather rare in the adventure as a whole. The bathroom is found to be in a bit of a mess, but the everuseful toilet roll is here. A randomly-inspired message pops up now and again which states, 'Contrary to popular belief, the Truck Driver's Guide to the Universe says that the toilet roll is the most precious and important item any person or being could possi-bly possess' and so it seems the right thing to pick the roll up forth-with. Other humorous asides refer to a certain Marillion fan (yes, that Fungus again), the planet with 'Nice Big Macs' (The the





Freeway through Space, and clearance schemes below . . .

Earth, stupid), and the fact that the Truck Driver's Guide makes no mention of the VIC 20 what-soever.

Don't Panic is no mean attempt at bringing the travails of Ford Pre-

fect and Co to the microcomputer screen. It is a *Quilled and Illustrated* affair with slowly shaded drawings, the odd typing error, and the odd query against its structure (as at the bridge where

you are told of a north-south path but not the east exit which sees progress). What the game does possess is oodles of character, good use of colour to enliven the text, and lines that are so ridiculous they tickle the chuckletums ('If you want to succeed, then supercede your old seeds with our new Superseeds. Sow some soon'— seen in the garden centre). Certainly worth the few Acturan Mega-Credits for this long three-parter, Don't Panic is available mail order from Dented Designs, 11 The Hill, Portstewart, Co. Londonderry BT55 7AT.

Difficulty: tricky in places, tacky in others
Graphics: simple with a certain cartoon flavour
Presentation: good; readable scificharacter set
Input facility: verb/noun
Response: Quill
General rating: longer than a

toilet roll and just as soft

Atmosphere 69%
Vocabulary 71%
Logic 78%

73%

71%

OPERATION STALLION

Producer: Wrightchoice Software Price: £6.95

Author: A J Wright



his Quilled, Patched and Illustrated program was sent to me some time ago. It's the first part of a trilogy of adventures

which give the successful adventurer a chance to collect £500 from the software house should he or she complete all three releases. This game consists of two quite distinct parts (and is so old that parts three and four should be ready about now). Part One sees you finding your way to the briefing room to meet your boss Cl. On your way you collect some items by searching around your office and, if you can avoid the two (rather obvious) sudden deaths, arrive at the briefing room to collect the equipment for your mission. But this is jumping the gun. Let's see who you are and learn about your mission.

For the last six months Britain has been swamped with drugs, Large quantities of high quality heroin have made their way into the country, and it was all the Drugs Squad Officers could do to prevent the system collapsing. One lead emerged during intensive questioning of captured deal-

ers - a Mr Big who went by the name of Stallion. A stroke of luck then led the team to a crashed lorry which was found to have the same type of heroin as their earlier hauls hidden within its tyres. A company named Grand Union were transporting a cargo of machinery parts to Istanbut with the lorry, and would seem to have returned from that city with the heroin aboard. Enquiries into the background of this company revealed it was run by one Chow King Kwok, whose record showed a history of drugsrelated offences. The team's head, Detective Superintendent Chambers, felt that they were on to something and that Kwok might

be the Stallion.

Overall

Addictive quality

Catching Kwok at his sinister game proved far from easy however, as the criminal always seemed to keep one step ahead of the team. Then an agent following Kwok discovered the existence of a mole supplying him with their every move, but the agent was killed before he could reveal the mole's identity. It was now that Kwok's case became a matter of great urgency and the Prime Minister was informed.

During times of peace you are John Blake a reliable administrator in the records department. Only two people know otherwise: Charles Jenson (CJ) your boss, and the Prime Minister. Your alter ego is The Fixer, a member of a small crack division, working in areas outside the Jurisdiction of the law. The work you

THE GOLDEN MASK

Producer: Compass Price: £2.50 Author: Jon Lemmon



h yes, good old Compass software. We last bumped into Compass in December '86 with a

game called Demon from the Darkside. Well, don't be fooled by the title, even officially, this is that game - Part Two. Like its predecessor, this makes full use every utility under the sun, including the precursor to PAW, the Press text compressor addition to the Quill suite of aids. Any regular reader will know that I'm a sucker for innovation, no matter how small, and here we have a simple deviation from the norm, where exit directions from a location are marked by little arrows. Simple enough, and not altogether easily followed, but I'm a sucker for novelty and you do get used to the things after a short while,

Looking back to Parl One in December, there was Morrack (your character), the apprentice to the wizard Ashmeard, he being the brave chap who banished Drakon to the cave of Illindel whilst at the same time relieving him of the Golden Mask. It was your task to add insult to injury and lighten the bad guy's load even further by snatching the Falcon Staff from him. Well, did you do it? If so, this is how the story now stands...

Having defeated Drakon and travelled back up the secret path of hell, Morrack once more stood in the lands of Dral. As he looked up at the bright sky, Wise the owl flew down to him. They talked for hours and it soon became apparent that Drakon had not died nor for that matter had Stodge the dwarf. Now there was a new Ashmeard the wizard was dead and with him died the knowledge of where the Golden Mask had been hidden. If Drakon found the mask before Morrack, he could once again summon great armies of demons and with Ashmeard dead, no-one could stop the evil which would devour Oral and all of its inhabitants. Your quest this time is to find the Golden Mask while avoiding Drakon's demon forces.

Visually, this game is goodlooking with a demon's mask prettying the text border (or should that be uglying?), detailed pictures – even if they do display a somewhat eccentric choice of graphic styles – and a character set which is 'olde worlde' yet still attractive and cleady readable. A good choice of colours keeps things bright, and more decoration accompanies the items in the inventory list, this time small token graphics.

Getting involved in the game reveals a very playable adventure where your character gets carried along in the smoothly flowing action. You might say the game is not too difficult in the sense that everything meshes together easily in a short space of time, but further into the plot you might find the limiting nature of the vocabulary slowing you up (as at the boat). The vocabulary on the whole isn't bad though, with both L and R bringing about a Redescribe. Examining things is best done once you've picked an object up, otherwise you meet an

unpreposessing reply. Exceptions are large objects like the boat which can be examined when first met. Apart from the crucifix (where EXAM CROSS delivers the goods with no allowance for EXAM CRUCIFIX) examine always seems to get a response, even if it's just the 'who are you looking at' from Wise the owl in the first few frames. He also says 'Morrack, time is short. Stodge told me to meet you here and to tell you that Drakon has sent five demons to seal off the mountains of the moon. Travel east and you may be able to cut them off'. Not everything is completely clear in all of this, but at least the owl tells you which way to go

Golden Mask is a very competent adventure. The game has 85 locations, 25 of which display pictures, and has over 160 messages. It makes good use of spot effects, with lights and noise when moving certain items and falling



perform is too important to be left to human foibles and for this reason a small explosive device has been implanted in your brain to ensure your continued loyality.

The adventure begins with a view of your office. The picture here isn't too bad but it is slowly drawn and even more slowly shaded, and it's rather untidily scrolled about two thirds off the The graphical quality becomes rather academic under these conditions. I make some fuss over the slow drawing for good reason; as the descriptions are long they tend to scroll off with your input and R for Redescribe goes via the picture again - quite a wait I can tell you. The view for the office picture, like some of the other room representations, is from the top side of one of the walls, a perspective which seems to work just fine.

The location descriptions do manage to create some atmosphere in their length. Just cop your eyes on this one, 'You're standing in your office. It is rather an untidy affair. You can see a sturdy desk with two drawers, one of which is slightly open, a telephone sits on top of the desk amidst a see of papers and manilla files. A filing cabinet stands in one conner. There are also two uncomfortable-looking chairs, and a laden bookshelf. A picture and several charts hang on the walls. On your right is a window whilst the door is south, You are also aware ofia book.' Up until the phone rings



(it rings six times!) summoning you to the briefing room to meet C), things are quite straightforward, with the GET ALL command, 'unusual in this type of adventure, proving most valuable.

Examining the bookshelf gives the same report as examining the book, a remark which seems odd unless a red herring is a tropical fish ('It's a book on tropical fish, a whole chapter is devoted to red herrings'). Once the boss has summoned you the program seems to clam up, not allowing you to do anything, although you are now allowed to leave your office, something denied you previously on the pretext that it was not your tea break. Exiting south

to your secretary's office and west through an oak door brings you to corridors of typing pools.

Part Two is begun by saving the objects CJ has offered you at the end of Part One. The numbers of the equipment on offer are found by consulting the catalogue and I think you'll find six objects are your limit, the Part Two you have traced Kwok to his new operational base at his brother's mansion in Scotland. A further complication is now brought in as this brother is a member of the Chinese Consulate and as such enjoys the privilege of diplomatic immunity. A raid by the police is therefore out of the question. This is clearly your job, and the PM's instructions are to obtain the evi-

dence to implicate Kwok, get him to divulge the name of the double agent who has infiltrated your ranks, and finally, terminate Stallion. By the time you reach Scotland only 17 of your 24 hours remain, and each move (including Redescribe) costs you six minutes. If the bull should kill you early on, the saved game from Part One must be loaded again, so take care.

Operation Stallion is a very worthy attempt to bring the excitement of a thriller to the adventure scene, t particularly liked the long and fascinating storyline to draw the player into the plot. There are one or two spelling mistakes (many centred around 'ie' order in words) but overall, a tine game.

Difficulty: first part seems simple enough

Graphics: some are quite detailed though all are based on square shapes, eg doors, corridors and chairs

Presentation: average, to say the

Input facility: verb/noun Response: last, but very slow graphics

General rating: interesting

Atmosphere 77%
Vocabulary 78%
Logic 75%
Addictive quality 72%
Overall 73%

down holes. The game looks good and plays well and you can't ask for more than that. Compass live at 36 Globe Place, Norwich NR2 2SQ.

Difficulty: not difficult Graphics: sometimes simple, other times detailed with unusual shading

Presentation: good use of colours Input facility: verb/noun Response: fast Quill

General rating: good, easygoing vam

Atmosphere 81%
Vocabulary 73%
Logic 82%
Addictive quality 74%
Overall 74%

I have equival into a Demor particular in the trees unlish surround me I can see Scandthing moving! EXITS: * I can also see: * a magic stone I crove your suidence. ETAKE MAGIC STONE II done.

RailE

BOOK OF THE DEAD

Producer: The Essential

Myth Price: £3.95

Authors: M Davies, A Dean,

L Hodgson

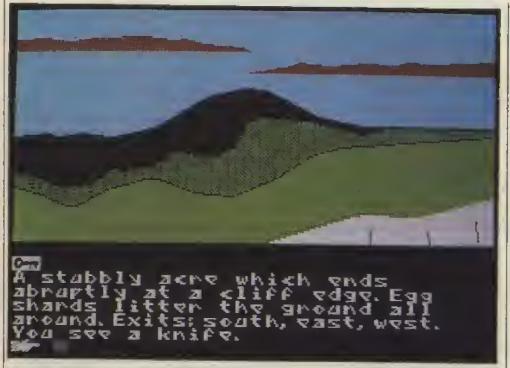
ith a name as good as The Essential Myth, this software house can't be bad. Although they're a mail-order only outfit, I

was impressed by the way in which the game was submitted with all the details a reviewer might need.

This game's theme has real topical appeal for me, as I've just returned from a trip to the British







Museum, where I wandered about for some time wondering where Tutenkhamen had got to (but too afraid to ask lest they think me just a top twenty man). Based upon the mythology of ancient Egypt, it makes several references to characters which actually exist in the tome of eternal knowledge, better known as the Collins English Dictionary (a cross between a dictionary and an encyclopedia).

It is here we find terse descriptions of the strange names that inhabit the Book of the Dead. Take Osiris, who was the ruler of the world and judge of the dead, and this Horus chappie, who was the solar god who quite liked to be seen with his ornate falcon's head. Throw in an Ibis, which is a wading bird found in warm regions, a Mangonel, which is a rock-

throwing catapult contraption talthough the picture does give a good clue here), and you should be armed with most of the terminology to see you well into the plot.

Your character is Kteth, a falcon-headed Egyptian godlet (al-beit a rather minor one). Life among the gods has been blissful, but after aeons of peace disaster strikes. Your divine father, the great god Set, foully murders the Chief of All Gods, Osiris, in the hope of usurping his coveted position. His ambition is not to be realised though, as the whole pantheon of deities led by Osiris' rage-maddened son, Horus, rises against Set and throws him from the Other World to the World of

It looks as though you'll be born banished from Paradise, but there is hope—some gods see no reason why you should be held accountfor the acts of your headstrong father, and offer their help to see you to the Other World. In this way the adventure presents you with a most unusual task -- to reach the gods you must die, and in a nutshelf this is what you must achieve to complete the adventure

You begin your task trapped within the gooey albumen of an egg, and it won't take long before you have a cracking idea as to how to proceed. Mapping is almost a complete waste of time. as everything seems to lead to just about everything else. The game's appearance is particularly good. It's colourful, and although the mock-Egyptian character set makes for difficult reading, it adds to the already exotic atmosphere.

A solid beep sounds as entries are typed, and both text and graphics appear promptly. The old GAC irritant whereby the last location's end lops a new description is still here, but the neat little hand pointing to the last input helps to break up the text.

Appearance is all very well, but what of the substance? Well, I found the game really entertaining. The problems are interesting and their solution a challenge - as each is solved you get that little self-satisfied glow which is the mark of a good adventure. Most of all I liked the intriguing way in which the characters are slowly introduced, keeping the player absorbed and creating a feeling that there's more good stuff round the corner.

Book of the Dead is The Essential Myth's first release. It is a two-part game, written using Incentive's Graphic Adventure Creator, the utility of the moment. The programming team learned so much during the game's formation that they plan to release GAC programming aids shortly, perhaps under the name GACprogramming PAC

Book of the Dead is a fine adventure in just about every department. The theme, presen-tation and plot are all of a very high standard, and I thoroughly enjoyed it. The mail order address for The Essential Myth is 54 Church Street, Tewkesbury, Glos GI 20 5RZ.

Difficulty: the friendly vocabulary ensures progress Graphics: colourful Presentation: good Input facility: verb/noun with IT and THEM Response: good General rating: very good

Atmosphere	89%
Vocabulary	86%
Logic	79%
Addictive quality	89%
Overall	88%

INHERITANCE

Producer: Infogrames Price: £9.95 Author: Gilles Blancon



his is another Infogrames product, this time com-posed of three parts. As with all these games, the lack of instruction is seen

as an integral part of the chal-lenge. To progress it's best just to start pressing keys and learn from what happens

Here's some of the everyday story of how our chap, down on his luck, is whisked off to Las Vegas to earn bags loads of money. The buildings were dilapidated, and suc-each other with mostly monotonous regularity. In his sor-did room on the 17th floor in one such squalid building, Peter lay dejectedly on his bed. Debts were mounting up and there was not even a glimmer of hope on the horizon. He hardly dared move outside his room for fear of meeting one of his creditors. With no rent paid for several months the

landlady was on the verge of throwing him out. Then a letter

arrived with an airline ticket to Las Vegas, £200, and a note explain-ing the death of his aunt, and how he was the sole heir to her fortune. Just one problem - he has to repeat her achievement of win-ning a million dollars in one night

in Las Vegas.

Part One has a very familiar look to it where the object is to move a cursor round a screen and find items of varying interest. In this case you must pack a bag full of goodies to distribute to the various creditors who prevent you leaving the building for the airport. Giving up to each character what you have borrowed placates them long enough to make good your escape. There are some nice touches here with one set of keys on the keyboard packing and unpacking your bag and separating and sorting the various objects you meet. Movement via doors is achieved by placing the roaming cursor onto a door handle, while placing it on the doorbell in some cases sees a chap opening his door. If this part is going well it shouldn't be too long before you see the taxi, that is if you don't run



out of time, an occurence of which you will be made fully aware as you will end up buried, dead and gone.

Part Two has you at the airport where you must get your passport, and sees you becoming involved with a hijacker, before leaving and looking for a bus to Vegas. Part Three is pure gambl-

ing.
Inheritance is a typically goodlooking Infogrames game, con-sisting of three parts which are played in order, with a code transferred between each. I don't know if I was that much impressed, and remain puzzled at the lack of lucid instructions, even for a reviewer, but no-one can doubt

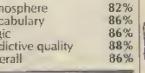
the superb graphics and the clever ideas which have become an infogrames hallmark.

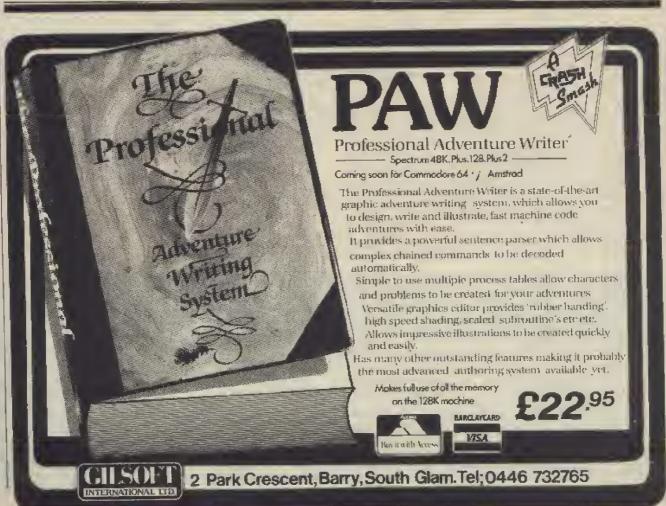
Difficulty: lack of instruction causes some difficulty Graphics: very good Presentation: neat

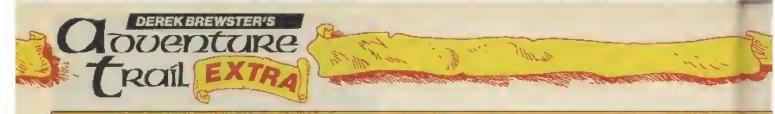
Input facility: keywords and sentendes

Response: okay General rating: another popular Infograme game

Atmosphere	82%
Vocabulary	86%
Logic	86%
Addictive quality	88%
Overall	86%







FIVE STEPS TO HEAVEN

WRITING A GOOD ADVENTURE

For over four years DEREK BREWSTER has been writing adventure games, and for the past three he's been reviewing them as well. With all this accumulated experience, he now lays out some golden dos and don'ts to constructing your own adventures.

STEP ONE

Does the world need your adventure?

The first thing to ask yourself is just what your adventure might have to ofter an unsuspecting public. Will it surprise in any way or be innovative in theme, plot or screen presentation?

Technical innovation in adventuring is important precisely because it is so rare. After all there's a vast wealth of old adventures and you must give the player some reason for choosing your game over those already in existence. Therefore it wouldn't be such a bad idea for the programmer to take a good look at adventures old and new to see the kind of areas in which the budding writer might excel.

STEP TWO

Choose your medium

Some of the earliest adventures were written in BASIC. Beginners All-purpose Symbolic Instruction Code is very well-disposed towards humans, but microcomputers take a long time to translate the language and hence programs are slow, too slow for today's commercial games.

Machine code, a language much more easily understood and worked by the computer, is super fast, but it isn't a language designed for humans, and many struggle with a tongue that assumes a great intimacy between programmer and machine. Utilities provide a relatively easy way to sample the speeds of machine code programming without the need to climb the strenuous learning curve of the machine's language. For a modest loss of room for innovative manoeuvrings, these routines provide adventures which are consistently better than most, for they are at the very least competently programmed.

The most famous utility was the Quill, updated with the Illustrator and Patch and Press, but this has now been overhauled, revamped and put out as the most impressive utility to date, The Professional Adventure Writer (PAW), a utility which is probably

good enough for just about all mainstream adventures as it does just about everything you need.

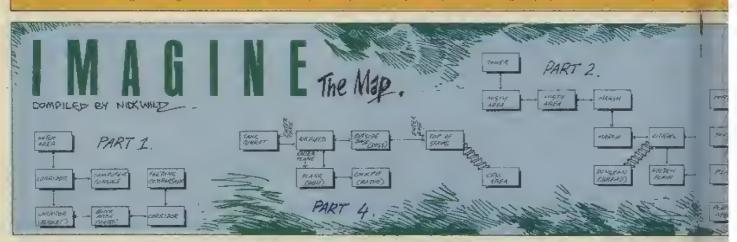
In between, incentive released a very useful aid named the *Graphic Adventure Creator*, whilst many smaller concerns released utilities for those on the lookout for the exotic, or perhaps a different look. This last is an important point as adventure cloning can bore players, hence the importance attached to *PAW* offering several ways of displaying the adventure written with it. In general, an adventure written using a utility must be innovative wherever it can, as people expect more from a game they believe they themselves might have written—if only they had the time.

STEP THREE Begin creating your world

Here's your chance to say something intelligently and coherently to a captive audience. All should be in context and keep concisely to the theme. You can take a leaf out of the notes of novelists here and try a little research into your chosen theme. For example, a game chronicling the travels of Ulysses should be just that, with the finished article being, in my mind, no way compromised because it might be considered educational. If I learn something new by watching a TV program, or playing an adventure, then the source of that new information goes up in my esteem.

The geography and bearings of your world should be readily understood with deserts wide, crevasses narrow and mazes convoluted, but don't overdo'the mazes and always give them a reason for being there.

At this stage you should consider the problems that will make up your adventure — for that is what an adventure is, a set of puzzles punctuating a coherent plot. Try to formulate problems you might meet in real life and to make the problems develop realistically. Avoid too many problems which are overly artificial, as with the rubber mat which is needed to prevent the aspirin falling down a hole no matter where the player is in Subsynk. Problems have a spacing and a direction. Manipulating these two factors you can sidestep the linearity which plagues many adventures and instead fan out the problem pathways so, ideally, the player has several paths to follow at any time. Avoid the two extremes of allowing the player to wander endlessly or





We're changing our format for the special this month. Instead of answering direct questions, I have supplied a few solutions to various problems in a wide selection of games. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those people who have sent in tips, for without them this section would not be possible. When a tip has been used, I have credited the helpful reader at the end of the section.

AFTERSHOCK

Trouble getting out of building? Take chair to lift, climb on chair, examine ceiling, remove panel and climb out of lift.

Can't drain the flooded tunnel? Go to storm drain, switch torch

on, go E, S, S, S, to sluicegate then S,E,E,E to find handle. Return to sluicegate, connect handle to shaft and lubricate mechanism. Open sluicegate.

Can't get the oli? Go to park area and examine bin to find bottle.

M KERR, Bognor Regis

THE BOGGIT

Having problems getting out of the house?

Open chest, climb into chest, get diary and examine it, climb out of chest, examine door and type in

Frodo's birthday.

Trouble passing the spider and web?

Pull web and go NE to meet spider. When it has had it's say give it the sandwich from Beorn's house. Pull web again before moving on.

OF THE BORED RINGS

Can't get through the Morona gate? Go to Mt Featherwop and collect the pepper, then take it to the gate and drop it, Giblet will sneeze and blow a hole in the gate.

To get a coin to buy a map, insert the battery into the vending machine. GARY JUKES, West Midlands

BUGSY

Having difficulty raising the money for a pisto17

Go to Deviney's Bar and fight. When approached by two hoods, talk to Louie and after exchanging greetings buy the mask from them. Go out and find a newsboy, wear the mask and ask for protection money. Find the other boys and do the same. You should then have enough money.

Trouble with the police?

Bribe them!

DARREN and JASON MANN

DRACULA

If you are attacked/killed in the dream sequence, here are the solutions. The food you choose will determine the type of dream you

If you are attacked by a wild dog look around, look table, get bone, give dog bone, then return to bedroom.

Choked to death - get to bed sooner.

Killed by innkeeper - never leave your bedroom without a lit lamp. Attacked by wild hirds – make sure you close your window before going to sleep.

Forced to jump from your own window – this is unavoidable, try a different combination of foods. To prevent cutting yourself shaving, get the tray and polish it.

DAVID EDWARDS, Bedford

ERIC THE VIKING

To please the eagle, feed it with boiled mutton.

To get the silver amulet throw the stick.

To please the dragon get the feather from its nose. To get the stone fruit, shake the tree and then plant it in the mountainside where

you begin. M WRIGHT, King's Lynn



RED MOON

Examine oyster for fungus treasure.

Play the dulcimer to entertain

Bostog. Wear the gloves to take the sword.

Eat the mushroom to enter the

tiny door. Give Kellf a bottle of water. Wear bracers to carry more.
'Obis' opens the sarcophagus.
'Ollabin' reduces the mummy to

dust. Rub out the red line in the red

room so that you don't cross it. Wear the wellies to enter the metal room.

R CHEWISON

ROBIN OF SHERLOCK

To enter the convent you need to be wearing the nun's habit.
To get gold for the peasant, just
ROB BISHOP, TAKE GOLD and
go south until you meet the peasant again.

To prevent Grandma blasting you, you will need to find the sheriff in the castle and when he runs off, take the flag he leaves behind.

JOHN WILSON, Rochdale

ROBIN OF SHERWOOD

To escape from the dungeon stand on prisoner, examine grating, call guard, grab his foot, strangle guard, take the sword, slide the bolt, open grating and go grating. Kill Belleme with the silver arrow

you win in Nottingham.

R CHEWISON

SEABASE DELTA

To get new travel permit, take old card to auto-clerk and sign form. To get the object from the table you need to wear the flippers. To wake the ben you need the gum and then blow bubble. To open the heavy metal door you need the tape and tape player.

SINBAD AND THE **GOLDEN SHIP**

To kill the wizard, enter the cage, pick up the iron rail and hit the wizard with it.

To get past the dragon, cut his chain with the axe.

To summon the Genie, take the oil lamp from the chest and say 'SHAMAN'

SIMON AUSTIN

EYE OF BAIN

Give honey to bear. To pass shapeless beast, carry ruby and say 'fire'. Show cross to skeleton. To enter temple, light the pile of wood with the torch.

SMUGGLER'S COVE

Use the ladder to span the trench. To get to the ledge in safety, you need to throw the rope and wear the shoes and then climb rope. To avoid rat bites you need the cat, it will follow you if you have the fish.

To escape at the end you must HARNESS DONKEY, ENTER ELEVATOR and THROW CAR-

SNOW QUEEN

If you are having difficulty talking to the raven, show it the opal to attract its attention.

If the city gates are closed when you arrive, go to the sheltered niche with dry leaves and sleep. If you have trouble with the big blind dog, just drop the mothballs as it relies on smell.

SORCERER OF CLAYMOURGE CASTLE

To dry towel squeeze it twice when over lava.

To avoid dying near dragon, drink

The stars are stored in tree using permeability.

SPIDERMAN

To defeat Electro and Dr Octopus, grab Dr Octopus before hitting Electro, they stould both now be stunned.

All the gems should be stored with Madam Web.
To start presses, take Lizard man, Electro, Dr Octopus, desk etc to the scales and keep adding things until the dial shows over 950. Then go to Ringmaster's room and type on computer, start,

PATRICK HARMES, Hants

SUBSUNK

To unblock the sink you need the rubber sucker from the toolbox and the broom from the broom cupboard. Then attach sucker to broom and plunge basin.

Drop the insulating mat on the ground to prevent the pill from rolling away and getting lost.

TEMPLE TERROR

Move the rock to enter the cave. Use paint to paint glass cover to mirror.

The glass cover covers an axe and is removed by saying the magic word found on the scroll.

Use the blanket to smother the fice.

To cross the pit, throw and swing on the rope.

DON'T PANIC SOLUTION

To complete parl'one:

1. From the bedroom go south, down the stairs, take the rod.

2. Go out, south twice, east three times, south, east, in the bank, take the credit card.

3. Go with wish twice in the gar-

Go out, west twice, in the garden centre, take the spade. Go out, east, north, west three times, north twice, dig, take the WOFIED

Go south three times, go fishing with the rod and the worms.

Take the burble fish (this must
be TAKE BURBLE FISH,
because LAKE FISH didn't work because fish was used as a cum-

Co. North, east three times, north, east, in. Ford Escort is here in the pub. He will now follow you if you have the fish.

tollow you if you have the fish. Take and examine fords, bag. Take the torch, if you have to drop semething, do not drop the credit card or the torch. Go out, west, south, type in WAIT. Fard will open the spaceship door. Switch on the sorch, TURN ON TORCH does not work!

Note: in the Vulgan ship, don't wander around or you'll get kopelessly lost! Go east twice, south twice, take the key. Go north twice, west, north, unlock the door, You'll be at the space-ait dispenser: insert the

card.

(Arthurshind wear the suit (Fordwill do the same). Go south twice, east twice, press the button, You'll be ejected into space and be picked up by the Geldol's Heart'spaceship.

11. Open your eyes, go south twice south, south, south east, You will now meet Marlon the Paralytic Android. Co west twice and you've finished.

Iwice and you've tirtshed;
To complete part lwo:
Type in the password; BRYAN
HATES HMMY (all in capitals),
From the start, go north, open
the cupitoard, take and
examine the cassette. Then just
mess about for the next five or

ness and the tempuler console, and push the lever (don't pull its, tand the ship, go out, then north, east, west, south.

Pull the bell rope, get into Smarly fartblast's Ci. He will then take you hack to his lab.

and teleport you to the other

when you arrive, go north, east and into the C5. Go west, south, east twice, south, get out of the C5. Go east, into the beach hul,

take the sue board. Go out, and south to the island. Open the chest, lake the coin and go north back to the beach. Go north, east enter the top shop, buy the water pistol, Go out, west, south, and into the

C5.
Go west, jump over the crevasse, Go west, in the toilet, fill the water pistol. Go south, west and shoot the dalek. From the receptionist, go east twice and in. Enter 'TYPE LOAD' and 'PRESS ENTER' as according to the lape instructions. Go north, insert the tape in the deck and finish the game. To complete part three.

To complete part three; Type in the password; 'WE WANT A MILLION' all in capi-

Take and read the brochures Once you end up outside the shopping centre, go east six

times. Press 2.
On the second floor, go south, take and examine the wallet. Take the credits.

Take the credits.

Go east, buy and wear the dining suit. Go west, north, west three times. Buy the battery recharger. Go east four times, Press 37. Go morth, buy the goldfish bowl. (BUY BOWL, not BUY GOLDFISH.). Go wouth, west twice, south, enter the restaurant.

ant.

Go north, east three times. Press '1', Go west five times, south twice, in. Give the bowl to the fortune teller, take the fuse and battery, kecharge the

hattery, Go sut.
Go north, east six times, break
the glass, take the hammer, hit,
the control box with it. Go
west, south, Ford will open the

spaceship door. Pull the lever: the ship takes off.

Pull the lever: the sing takes on Examine the console, examine the panel, insert the fuse, Press the button.

Once on the Vulgar belching, star cruiser, go west, south, east, Take the gadget, insert the recharged battery, press the button and you've done it.

EUREKA

PREHISTORIC

To kill the man in black, throw the axe you made out of the flint and bone and do not move until it bits him.

ROMAN

To escape from the leper colony give the mad leper the egg the chicken lays (buy the chicken and go west).

WARTIME GERMANY

To open the shed get the bunch of keys at the guarded gate and go into the lorry from the window ledge (It is possible keep trying). MODERN CARIBBEAN

To get into the house, throw the carcass of the panther into the pool and get the metal strip which can be used on the window.

To get into the secret stairway examine the book.

Use the spanner to open the steel door.

H JONSSON, Weking

ESPIONAGE ISLAND

To get knife give beads to native. To get the beads, go to the wreckage and feel corner. To cross the crevasse, put branch and then go south.

To pass the tank, go to the control hut and switch switch, go to the landing clearing, remove the light and insert explosive. Return to the control hut and switch switch.

KAYLETH

To get the cassettes from the canister you need the tape and the gloves. Wear gloves, get canister, open tape, stick tape to canister and then get all.

If you are having trouble with your eyes burning out, you need the lens from the Pyxis.

5 BENNETT, Manchester

BOOK OF THE DEAD

The complete solution for the Book of the Dead follows, with explanation for the moves, and alternative vocabulary which can be used. Note that no attempt is made to score maximum points, or to explore various interesting off-theroute parts of the adventure.

Part One, BREAK EGG: or SMASH/CRACK SHELL, You are born into the game inside an egg – a reminder that you are (or were) a falconheaded god; GET KNIFE; SOUTH, SHEAR SHEEP. To the sheep; An EXAMINE SHEEP message here gives a clue. You are now the proud owner of a fleece; drop KNIFE: no longer needed; SOUTH, SOUTH: to the lake; WASH FLETCE: or CLEAN, It's dirty when first sheared; EAST, NORTH: to the weights location; LIFT WEIGHTS: or USE. This builds your muscles. EXAMINE WEIGHTS gives a clue; SOUTH: to the builds your muscles. EXAMINE WIRGH'S gives a clue; SQUIHS: to the boulder location; GET BOULDER; it's too heavy unless above body-building has been done. Getting the boulder unblocks the channel—water rushes from the lake (emptying it) over the cliff, soaking a hermit underneath. HELP works here. SOUTH; to the mangonel; LOAD MANGONEL WITH BOULDER or PUT BOULDER in MANGONEL; fiRE MANGONEL; or SHOOT. The fired boulder hits the bird which flies over the lake, NORTH; to the lake; GET IBIS: the bird can now be flies over the lake, NORTH: to the lake; GET IBIS: The bird can now be picked up from the (empty) lake where it falls. You also pick up an ankh, which it was carrying in its beak. NORTH, WEST: to the lemple. PRAY TO AMON: RA or WORSHIP. Amon-Ra is a sun god, he causes the sun to shine brighter, drying the washed fleece. Amon-Ra demands you carry the sacred ankh when worshipping him though. SOUTH, NORTH: to lake again; GET FLEECE; now dry; SOUTH; to the southern cliff edge; PLUCK IBIS: getting a quill which you need later; DROP IBIS: no longer needed; THROW FLEECE OVER CLIFF: THROW QUILL TOO: these drop to the bottom of the cliff. You are now carrying nothing; DOWN: If any objects are carried, the rope snaps; GET FLEECE, GET QUILL: picking them up again.

UP: The rope now snaps since you are carrying things, But it's okay as you are safe at the bottom. TUG or PULL ROPE doesn't quite break the rope – you've got to actually try and climb up it. The rope has only one weak point, and now this is broken it can be used again; GET ROPE: EAST: to the wel hermit under the cliff; DRY HERMIT WITH THE FLEECE: the hermit is pleased, and gives you amagic scroll; READ SCROLL; invokes a gnome who asks for a command. The gnome is actually Bes, a friendly god. CURE ME: or RID CURSE/DISEASE: the gnome cures you, ridding you of the lime problem; EAST: to the shallows of the Nile; EXAMINE RIVER: or NILE/WATER. Clue in room description 'Examining the situation, you appear to be . . . HELP gives assistance here too. Some stills are hidden on the river bed. GET gives assistance nere too, some sints are nidden on the river bed. Get STILTS: WEAR STILTS; you are now taller, enabling you to cross the river without drowning! EAST, NORTH, NORTH, SOUTH: to the town gates. You lose the fleece and stilts on the way — but they're not needed anyway. WAIT, or any other move such as INVENTORY/LOOK etc. A woman appears, mutters 'SOMETHING' to the town gatekeeper and is let in. She then goes to the tavers in the town, This is important; if is let in. She then goes to the tavern in the town, This is important; if you don't wait for her she will never get there. NORTH; or HELLO: GREET/TALK/SPEAK (TO) GATEKEPER. He asks you for the watchword to get in ... which is SOMETHING of course, HELP is useful here. NORTH, DOWN: to the beggar in the gutter; GET COIN: heartless isn't it?; UP, WEST, WEST, EAST, EAST: To the rubbish durap, where there are many objects to pick up. A convoluted route must be taken to avoid a band of thugs which circle: tavern—street end—street corner—back street —rubbish durap, You are warned when the thugs are approaching. GET BODY OF SHABTI, WEST WEST, EAST, GET MEAT; WEST, WEST, EAST, SOUTH, SOUTH; to the market again avoiding thugs en route.

TOWER OF DESPAIR

To dispose of Death, type in STEALTH to enter stealth mode and then USE DAGGER.

To survive in Despair, cover your

To take the globe in Hope, wear the gauntlet.

Dispel the force field by dropping the jade.

JERRY VAUGHAN, Caerphilly

TWIN KINGDOM VALLEY

To kill the dragon you need the wooden staff from one of the towers, then you must hit the dra-

gon with it. To kill the witch with the gold staff you must give her the silver dagger that attacks its wielder. No other attacks will work as she has a staff that lurns all your

VALKYRIE 17

To get money for the hotel bill, pawn the necklace. To return to the hotel, get the string from outside the butchers and ride the cable car by tying the string to the lever.

BILLY DINGEALL, Edinburgh

VERY BIG CAVE ADVENTURE

To kill the python just open the can and the bird will do the rest. Drop the leg to cross the chasm. In two-pit room, water plant Iwice and then dial paraquat on the utility belt to kill the triffid. To pass the wombat, drop the pirate's chest and open it to release the ferret.

KENTILLA

To pass the Sirens, put wax in your ears, it's found in the Urgamaul's cell.

MOUNTAINS OF KET

To go through the dead-end wall in mint condition, carry wand and say 'polo'.

To cross 20' crevasse, carry less than six objects and drink elixir.

GOLDEN BATON

To kill the wolf, use the sword found in the rotting leaves. To unlock the massive doors in castle rub the golden ring (found up tree in hollow).

To fill lamp squeeze oil sodden

To kill lizard man, wave the glowing quartz.

THE HELM

To get the key from the well you will need the hook and the rope, then tie rope and go fishing at

To progress through the ice pit you will need to use the salt. Before collecting the salt you will need to have the plastic bag to prevent it from dissolving

To pass the Psysk you will need to shine torch, this will temporarily blind you so you can't be hypnotised.

THE HULK

To find Dr Strange, enter the ant's dome with wax, examine base board, plug the gas outlet and bite lip.

To pull ring enter tunnel with but-ton, type 'remember nightmare' when you are the Hulk, go west and pull ring.

To destroy egg but not bio gem, go to fuzzy area, remember nightmare, go north and eat egg, leave bio gem in room until all other gems are collected.

D SIMMONS, Doncaster

IMAGINATION

To move between the different parts, pinch arm.

KNIGHT'S QUEST

Trouble with the snake? Strangle it. To enter the boat, board it. To release boat, cast off. To stop freezing to death, wear cloak from witch's tower.

LORDS OF TIME

FIRST ZONE

Wave lodestone to get keys. Get petrol from car and save tin of catfood and tin opener for next

SECOND ZONE

Pour petrol on wood near mammoth and light it.

Give opened catfood to sabretoothed tiger and pull tooth (you will need the spear to keep him back). This tooth will satisfy the

tooth fairy in part one. To get icicle to fall — shout. Throw icicle into lake to make it

freeze over. THIRD ZONE

If you're having trouble with the skeleton - Ihrow painter pebble at it.

FOURTH ZONE

To find parchment, dig in cave with soft sand twice.

MAFIA CONTRACT

At car you must open trunk and cut the blue wire to defuse the bomb. After this get in the car and go east. At the station, buy a ticket by

inserting the coins:

To get the drink you need - give the Iramp the newspaper and drink the meths.

MINDSHADOW

To find the map to enable you to get through the quicksand climb down the vine to the cave

To start a fire to attract a ship you will need the straw, steel and stone. Drop the straw and rub the steel with the stone

BRIAN BOYD, Bristol

WARLORD

To pass the guard, wear Lug's hel-

Rest at the river bank to receive

the sword. To kill the bear you need the sword and shield.

To survive the cavern fire wear the white cloak.

To scare off the demons wear the amulet.

R CHEWISON

WITCHES CAULDRON

To get past fire you must put it out with magic dust.

To open coffin, oil it with oil

To kill dzagon you will need help from the lion.

To escape from snake blow whis-

To open south door in room with signs on wall you must have a bone, then make a skeleton key. To turn into a gorilla you need whisky, shell, eye from toy and diamond.

To turn into man you need a tied ribbon, gold coin, ten pence and lions hair.

1117

To enter the phone box you must wear the tie.

To fill the water pistol you must put the bucket on the hook in the well and turn the handle twice. The bucket will now be full of water and you can fill the pistol.

PLANET OF DEATH

To dispel the forcefield you must first have the mirror. Then REFLECT FIELD, where the computer will respond it has weakened it. Do this until the response 'nothing happens' appears and then type VANITY response WALTZ.





REBEL PLANET

If you have trouble at the customs, give card and then go complex. To get the laser sword past the customs carry it in the lite Kuhe.

To escape from the jail, bend bars with wrench and then activate laser before climbing through hole. Attack the policer as soon as you meet it.

JOHN WILSON, Rochdale

PRICE OF MAGICK

Get wolfsbane to stop werewolf from attacking.

Smash the mirror to find the prism.

Throw salt at the slug. Cast FIX to kill Wight.

The red moon makes you young, only twice.

Cast MAD on yourself and give ashes to pass through the glowing gate.

ADAM ELLIS, Oxford

NÉVER ENDING STORY

you have the Make · sure glowglobe before you go east from the church.

To enter the tower you must unlock the door when you have

the golden key, then go east. To enter the Empress' quarters just say please.
JOHN WILSON, Rochdale

MORDON'S QUEST

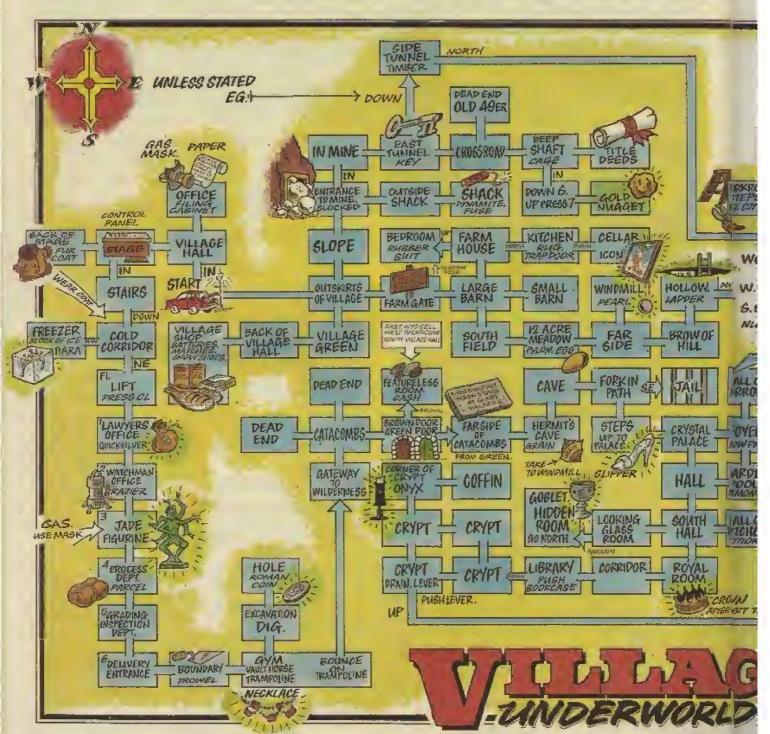
To cross the quicksand - drop the

blanket over it.
To kill the pygmy – get the berries, thorns and bamboo and make blowpipe.

To pass the plant - feed it with the pygmy.

To escape from the arena -smoke the cigar in front of Caesar.

EMMA HEGGIE, Salisbury





WORLD WAR IL BUNKER W.W.S.E.N.N. CROSS S.S.W.N.E.E. NUMBERS ARE DIRECTIONS 5-W 6-8 7-NB-E

TO W.W.II

BUNKER PASSAGE PASSAGE PASSAGE

217

R VINT TO CRYPT. PASSAGE PASSAGE

GLASS

SPUNTER

RARES

TO OFFICE IN TOWN HALL

INL OF

the main menu, but when I'm lucky the words disappear and

everything returns to normal.

The utility itself works fine but I'm sick of this message flashing on the screen! It has even happened while working on the graphics. This time I thought the game had crashed, but upon try-ing to BREAK, it worked. This is no ordinary bug, it wastes mem-ory and often destroys my data after hours of hard work. So, who's been mucking about with my GAC which I paid hand-somely for. I can't be the only one to have fallen victim to this nui-

Stephen Teasdale, Cumbria

Well, Stephen, the first thing to question is whether some rival has sneaked into where you work on your pet projects and tam-pered with your program. If this seems unlikely then it looks like some chap at Incentive has been fooling around. Either way, your letter has now given the scoun-drel some publicity which will no doubt give the culprit some amusement. DR

DUE'D THE **OBSCURE**

Dear Derek, With regard to the letter you pub-lished on the subject of getting old adventure games, I have been running an adventure swap club and it works like this. People send the game they wish to swap and a list of at least ten games they want. If no swap has been found within a month, the game is returned and their name, address and swap will be kept on file for a forther three months. When a suitable swap comes in they will be notified and arrangements made.

Wayne Styles

Dear Derek, Thanks for Margo Porteus's advice on finding old games. I'm afraid it wasn't much use though. Yes, I have written to Firebird. They sent me back a catalogue with 'Subsunk/Helm no longer available' on it. I've trekked round all the local shops, used school trips as excuses to go to other towns, trekked round, asked and generally got a bit cheesed off. Yes, it does sound a bit much to do for a couple of ancient games, but I enjoyed Seabase Delta so much, and, well you know what I mean!

Anyway (and if you print this Derek, I promise I won't hassle you ever again - honest!) what I want to say is this. If anyone is willing to sell me Subsunk or The Helm, I will gladly buy it from

them, and pay postage etc.
Scott Robinson, Lincoln

CRACKING THAT KRAKOD

Dear Derek.

have just finished Kobyashi Naru, a budget adventure from Mastertronic, and thought that you might like the solution for

future reference.

The game, in which you endeavour to join the immortals, is split into three parts, each com-pletely independent of each other.

TASK ONE: KNOWLEDGE

You start on a plain. Pick up the scimitax - a huge sword boomerang. Ignore the ani-



mals.

Go South;

a) analyse the Niecor plant to get leaf.

analyse the tree. This will inform you that the tree has pods. Throw the scimitax at the stems. The scimitax will return, and you can pick up the pods.

Go North again, and then East. You will be caught by a Giant Krakod;

cut the tentacles.

b) activate the pod (you will find that it will excrete a liquid if examined) which leaks a black liquid.

throw the pod into the maw. The Krakod will throw you over a thorn wall.

There is a fungi here, but it is useless. Go South.

It is impossible to penetrate the red mist;

pick up the blue flower. This is what you had to get to finish the task.

however, you are now being poisoned so use the leaf to cure yourself.

Go back North. Ascend the obelisk. You will see a sign saying 'wot no vertigo' hmm. Jump the barrier. Make your way West to the

start location and go North. This marks the end of Knowl-

edge when all of your possessions will be taken - not very friendly. Ewan McEachran, Staffs

Ewan goes on to give the solu-tions to WISDOM and UNDER-STANDING, but you wouldn't want me to give the whole game away just like that, would you?

TELL SIDNEY THE AFFAIR'S OVER

Dear Sizs

Here is the solution to the game Sidney Affair by Infogrames. It took me about two and a half

hours to complete.

First, load in Part One. Here you are shown the scene of the crime where Mr Sidney was shot. You must position the magnifying glass over the body's right trouser packet to find the briefcase key. You will also find a wallet in the left hand jacket pocket, in the briefcase you find a diary and a black and white photograph. If you search the rest of the scene you will find a bullet hole in the wall which is about three spaces to the left of the door. This completes the first scene. You will then be shown a room where the shot was fired. On the window, just below the latch, there is a fingerprint. On the top of the plant pot you will find the cigarette butt and on the floor behind the curtain, the spent car-tridge. This completes the first

part of the game. Now load in Part Two.

This section is where you gather information and statements from other characters in the game. The input is nearly the same as infograme's lirst game, Vera Cruz, where you only input certain names or words to get the answers. There are seven main characters in this section. Here are their names and addresses:

1. Mrs Marianne Sidney (Wife), Sylvie Sidney (Daughter), Ludovic Sidney (Son) – St James Square, Clermont.

Peggy Cachet (Servant of House Keeper), Henri Lajoie (Caretaker) - St James Square, Clermont.

Robert Renard (Tino di Nallo) - 336 Blatin Street, Clermont Dores Square, Cournon.

4. Hubert Decol (Patrick Languille) - Jade Place, Clermont Hotel Gevaudan St Chely.

There are four options you can choose to gather information. They are:

S Statement, E Examination, M. Message, C Comparison. There is also option A. Use this to make the Arrest.

There now follows the complete solution to the second part. Type in the option then press return, then type the second part and press return and then the third part and return. Do not type the words in brackets.

AUTOPSY SIDNEY BALLISTICS

E:

WITNESS (JEANNOT) MRS SIDNEY: JAMES (MARIANNE)

DECOL: JADE MARIANNE: JAMES

DECOL: JADE SIDNEYS CARETAKER:

JAMES (LAJOIE) SIDNEYS SERVANT: JAMES

(PÉGGY) SIDNEYS SON: JAMES

(LUDOVIC) DAUGHTER: SIDNEYS JAMES (SYLVIE)

LAJOIE: JAMES

RENARD: BLATIN

MARIANNE: JAMES

SYLVIE: JAMES

MARIANNE: JAMES NALLO: DORES

LUDOVIC: JAMES

NALLO: DORES

LUDOVIC: JAMES

NALLO: DORES

GIE LYON: SERGEANT CLERMONT: LAN-M: CIAT

GUNLE. CLERMONT: LAN-M: BDRJ GUILLE

M: DG: PATRICK LANGUILLE

LANGUILLE: CHELY

C: LANGUILLE

JEANNOT: REPUBLIC

E: BALLISTICS

LANGUILLE; CHELY 5:

NATIO: DORES

LANGUILLE €:

NALLO C:

NALLO: DORES

LANGUILLE: CHELY

NALLO

C: LANGUILLE

NALLO: DORES LANGUILLE: CHELY

5: NALLO: DORES

LANGUILLE: CHELY

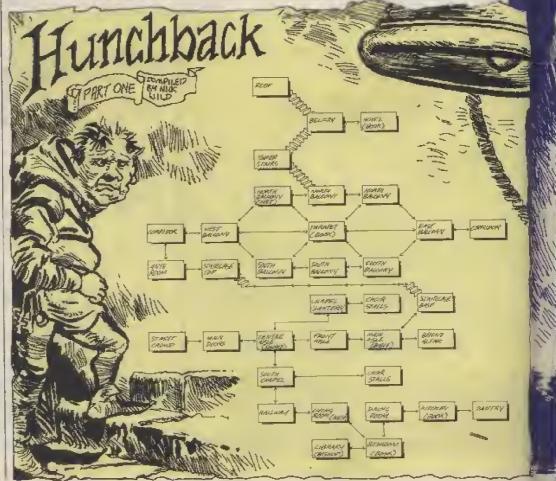
A: guess who?

You will then receive the following message: 'The author congratulates you on solving this mystery. You showed persever-ence, intelligence, and an ability for police work in clearing up 'The Sidney Affair'. You will now be promoted - ready for your next case.

And that is that. Altogether a game I very much enjoyed. I can't wait for the next one, Murder On

the Atlantic. A Archer, Middlesex

You do indeed show some aptitude for police work with this solution, a job which earns you this month's £20 worth of





DEREK BREWSTER'S

for the Zen spell, cut the mirror with diamond, the diamond being in the ring which is on the knucklebone. To get the prism for the Xam spell go into the room that was made from cutting the that was made from cutting the mirror. To get the axe for the Kil spell it's quite simple as it lands on your head in one of the rooms taking 50 strength points. To get the ashes for the Zap spell, burn the woodpile.

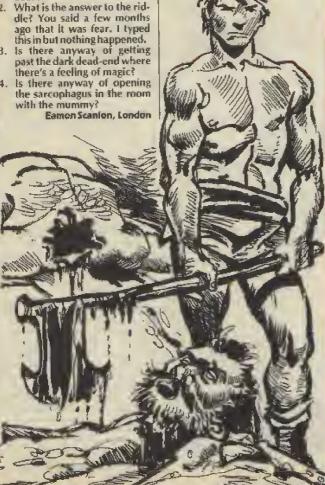
That's how to get the stuff for the spells, now here's some help on the other aspects of the game.

To get the armour from the ghost, bury the skull bones and knucklebone (remove ring first) with the spade. To safely get the talisman, cast Fly at weight by rubbing the talisman you get transported to a new section of locations. Casting the Zen spell will bring you to the mists of time. Here you can enter different locations much quicker. When you are in the misty room or corridor, cast the See spell and to get the wheel in this room cast Hyp at the bat saying 'take wheel' to it. To read the inscription on the ceiling, cast Fly at yourself. To be able to stay down on the river bed, cast Fin at yourself but remember to take all your stuff again afterwards because you

That's all the help, now can anyone help me.

How do you get past the stone door?

this in but nothing happened.



ute enough for now. Well done R 5 Cole of Nottin-





Guess what? PBM MAILBOX celebrates its first birthday this monthit's survived 12 issues with only one libellous article, so I'm sure you're not surprised to see me still here. Well, I hope you're not . . . anyway, after a year of in-depth PBMing, perhaps it's time to pay a visit back to basics for a recap of the play-by-mail hobby and how to get into it.

PBM?

PLAY-BY-MAIL games are multiplayer strategy and/or fantasy games played through the

post.
Each PBM game is nin by a central body, the 'Game Moderator' (GM). The number of players varies from game to game; to each player the GM posts a 'turnsheet' or 'print-out' showing his or her individual position and situation in the game, plus the results of the player's last actions. The player interprets this information and plots his plans (or plans his plots?) for the future, filling in an 'orders form' to tell the GM what he wants to do that turn. This orders form is returned to the GM by post; the GM then

the GM by post; the GM then carries out the orders in the game itself, by hand or on a computer. The results of these orders are determined by the scenario within the game, including the other players' orders – and the results are then posted back to the players on their turnsheets. Thus the game continues . . .

DIPPY PLAY

THERE'S ANOTHER important factor in PBM gaming: DIPLOMACY, Diplomacy is the Interaction of players outside the game environment to improve each player's position. It can

include trade between players, treaties, declarations of war (which should be made for a good (which should be traced to a got reason ...), and the strategic placing of disinformation to confuse an enemy! There are many opportunities to develop play through diplomatic communications; it's up to you, the player, to recognise and exploit them.

THE GAMES

THERE ARE MANY genres of PBM game: fantasy, sci-fi, strategy, role-playing (RPG), historical . . . and mixtures of the lot. You could be the captain of a tot, no could be the capital not a starship, a power-crazed tyrant, a tribal leader or even a mythical character – the choice is yours. In CRASH I try to mention as

many different games as possible (though I tend to stay close to computer-moderated games rather than their human-procescomputer mag, after all . . .), so if you flick through this section or the specialist PBM mags (listed below) you'll soon see what's on

The concept of PBM gaming is enthrelling. Over the past year, many PBM companies have reported a great influx of new players into the hobby. This is a good thing, and as long as the new players learn and respect the established traditions (no 'I'm bored of this game, I'll take somebody out with me' tactics, please!) PBMing will have a bright

QUESTION TIME

Many of the letters I receive are asking the same questions, so here's a selection of common queries - with a few answers, naturally

HOW OFTEN MUST A TURN BE COMPLETED?

This depends on which game you're playing in. Some games have an orders deadline: If your orders don't reach the GM by that date, then the round will be made without you. The most common turnaround rate is fortnightly, though there are quicker games for eager PBMers and slower ones for players living abroad, whose orders take longer in the post.

On the other hand, some games operate a real-time environment by having open deadfines; you can send them orders as often or as rarely as you like, and the game progresses daily

HOW MUCH DO GAMES COST?

Prices vary greatly. There's usually a fee around £5 to join a game, which may include your start-up pack and a few turns. After you've used these freebies, you must pay for each turn, prices vary from below £1 to above £5 a turn. The norm is about £1.50, so a game running fortnightly deadlines could cost just 75p a week plus postage – small price for a lot of

HOW DO GAMES END?

Good question! Again, it varies Some games just go on and on and on. You simply stop playing when you tire of the game, when the GM tires of you (!), or when the GM tires of everything and decides to set up a profitable business, like recycling postage stamps. Other games operate a points system, and once a player hits a set (but secret) score, ba-birig, the game ends. Most games work this way.

WHAT DO I GET FOR MY MONEY?

or, How long is a printout?

In general, you get a great deal for your money once the game begins to develop (when you start In a new game, it takes a few turns for the game to mature and become more game to mature and become more interesting than confusing). Some companies offer reams of detail. Anyway, I doubt you'll be disappointed – if you are, write in and tell me! And when you come to make your orders, it's never just a simple case of 'GET TORCH' or 'GO WEST' – I've known order forms to take the best part of an evening to complete properly!

I LIVE OUTSIDE THE UK

... can I still play British games?

Yes! Every PBM company I know of offers slow-turnaround games for players from the Continent, Africa, Asia, America and the other places, Write to the companies to find out. And there are many ways of sending money abroad, so just call in at a local bank and ask for

Incidentally, I know of some

players on the Continent who play mainly to improve their English. And some British players, now I think about it . .

ARE THERE SPECIALIST PBM MAGS?

Yes, three . . .

PBM Magazine, Emjay, 17 Nottingham NG5 58U (£1.25)

Flagship, PO Box 12, Aldridge, Walsalf, West Midlands WS9 0TJ (£1.75)

First Post, KG Pack, Walnut Tree Lodge, 9 Kings Meadow Lane, Higham Ferrers, Northamptonshire NN9 8JE (£1) But don't forget to read PBM MAILBOX every month as well!

WILL THEY EVER

improve that drawing of you, Brendon?

1 don't know. I hope so; it makes me look like a cross between Spock and an old Action Man. I can hardly recognise my stunning profile in that sketch, though it isn't my good side . . .

HEAVY ON THE **FACTIONS**

IN THE PAST couple of months I've received several letters telling me about a new(ish) fantasy/RPG game called Faction Magici was somewhat sceptical of this wondrous game till there arrived in my mailbag a letter and stärtup package from Steve Newton (of Newty Garnes). I'll save you all my boring waffle -- the letter read:

Dear Brendon Dear Brendon

Along time ago in a land ... Once
upon a tim ... Quite some time
ago ... Well, about ten months
ago, CRASH and MICRONET
organised a competition to design
a multiuser game for a computer,
along the lines of MUD. I gave it a
go, and was fortunate enough to
be one of the runners-up — which
wasn't bad for a first attempt.

Apyway, the point of all this is

Anyway, the point of all this is that I went on to develop the idea into a PBM game, details of which lenclose. The game was launched on a national basis in January, and despite (or because of?) being offered sleeping room on Mike McGarry's floor, i wasn't able to

attend the convention. As you will see, the game is hand-moderated and is based in the far future, when we're recovering from having blown ourselves back to the Stone Age, though the history of the time doesn't see it like that, of course.

The game is quite large in scope over 60,000 different locations in the known world alone, 200-plus settlements ranging from villages to cities, and four distinct types of monster, leading to more than 100

thouses, leaving to more than 100 types in all.

The object of the game is to rise through the ranks of the magicians' hierarchy while advancing the cause of your faction (in fact, each complements the other). the other). However, things are not

that simple. Like all hierarchies, the higher means the fewer, and players may find it necessary to 'take out' a rival in the higher status groups. Added to this are the difficulties of Added to this are the difficulties of members of the other factions trying to do this to you; poisoning (very rarely), plague and the occasional Hill Dwarf trying to rape your horse (they supply their own stepladders!). As you can understand, life is seldom dull... And so the letter continues. The startup package contains a very startup package contains a very clear rule book, a few pretty pictures, a map of the land of Trinovía, and a blank turnsheet.

As you may have gathered, you play the role of a magician, a

PBM FORUM

This hasn't been a very good month for me: first I crash my car into a bolting cow (an interesting experience; and no – it did not sound its horns. Nor did it monogove over. I have heard ALL the jokes.) Then I find I've received only half the normal amount of mail (just three sacks this time). But as I see it, we have two options. Either you ALL write letters to me, or I get no post. Sound fair? Good. Enough of this rambling, on with the letters . . .

MOAN MOAN

Dear Brendon With regard to the PBM Awards, I with regard to the PBM Awards, in belleve next year's awards should include a Biggest Pain In The Neck trophy. Conquest Games should get this award for changing the rules three times in as many masths. We see furthering.

months, it's so frustrating! Roy Pollard, Stapleford, Nottingham

My only comment is this: have the rule alterations improved the game's reality and fairness?

SNIFF SNIFF

I'm sure you have full knowledge of KJC's action against Arcadia and the company who ran it, Jade Games. I had been playing. Arcadia for some time and I thoroughly enjoyed the game. I had never even considered playing Earthwoold (the game whose copyright

Arcadia supposedly breaches), so KJC have not lost any business

from me! To deprive me of my favourite To deprive me of my favounte entertainment in such a way earns my utter condemnation. After all, Arcadia is not a new game — many people have been playing it for months and, at the time of closing, had well-developed characters. In the light of what KJC have done, I will never consider playing any of their future names (old or

any of their future games (old or

Draug-Dur, Arcadia 13

You're not very impressed with KJC – do any Earthwood players wish to comment? RK

SLOTH SLOTH

Could you please tell the guy who runs Sioth Enterprises that he has paid in my cheque but has not sent me my startup pack! People have been hassing me to join the game for ages; so now I join and nothing happens.

Talking of Saturnalia, it would seem that J Cottrell is right—if the game is so boring and medicare, why does everybody seem to love

Char De Bell, Watford Hertfordshire

Consider them lold. As for your final comment, well, all I can say is 'ooops' again. Mutter, mutter. (By the way, yes—the notelets are different. 'Cute' is not a term I like to use. Too Yanki)

That's the best I could come up with this month. So come on now, put pen to paper and send me some juicy gossip and/or news. The address is: PBM FORUM, CRASH, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB

By the way, does anybody want to buy a used Triumph Spittire? Going cheap ...

follower of one of the land's seven or so gods. There are all sorts of hierarchies and things to progress through – plenty for any RPG fan. If you'd like further details, send an SAE to:

Newty Games, Railway Cottage, Pennance Road, Pennance, Lanner, Redruth, Cornwall TR16

Don't forget to mention CRASH I Startups for CRASH readers cost £5 (including three free turns), and turns cost £1.60 thereafter.

MAIL-BOXING

THE Pro-Box Club appears to have done the impossible; PBM

The PBMer roleplays as a boxer over a ten/tweive-month period. The aim of the game is to be the most successful boxer in the game when the last round is called. Different!

Turneround is fortnightly and each turn costs £1. For further details send an SAE to:

Pro-Box Club, 32 Greenford Gardens, Greenford, Middlesex

SOCCER STUNNER

KICK-ABOUT is yet another PBM soccer game. But unlike other soccer games (and I receive news of SO many), *Rick-About* has a startup package which is professionally presented, with a well-collated and understandable rulebook and a copy of the Kick-About fanzine

it's a game of team management: each league is split into four divisions, with ten teams in a division. Against the other teams of his league the player pits his wits, imagination and whatever else you pit in the game. And there are cash prizes.
This is one of the best soccer

versions I've seen, though I don't like the sport. I haven't tried Kick-About, but I was tempted

Startup costs £5, and turn fees are 50p a session; there are ten sessions each season. So £9 will cover startup and a whole season. For further details, send an SAE

Phil Shulkind, 58 Hampstead Road, Dorking, Surrey RH4 3AH

(Note that Phillis a very successful and well-known PBM player; he's not likely to try any funny

PBM MAILBOX: DIPLOMATIC DIRECTORY June is here at last, but don't let her distract you too much . . . Just remember - be careful out there, and keep in touch through the DIPLOMATIC

DIRECTORY

#001 Adrian Neal 48 Marketstead Estate, Kirton, Boston, Lincolnshire PE20 ISL GAMES: Vorcon Wars 72@78; Capitol 15; Earthwood 52; Areadia 6; Star Empires 1: Compuest

*002 Jason Franch 78 Princes Road, Ellacombe, Torquay TQI 1PA GAMES: Vorcon Wars 75 (Commander BLITAD)

#003 Travia Smith 27 Sharmon Crescent, Braunstone Frith, Leicester LE3 6NW. GAMES: Stargiobe 4 (SS Belle Julie)

*004 Robert Darbyshice 22 Thornton Gate; Clevleys, Lanca, FY5 1]N GAMES: It's A Crime! I (Death Wor-riors); It's A Crime! 4 (Magacity Blues)

*005 Stuart Millitaship 17 Graveney Gardens, Arnold, Nottin-gham NG5 6QW GAMES: Vorcon Wars 75. (Commander SHUTUN)

*006 Mr G G Manganoni 109 Kings Road, Farncombe, Surrey GUT 3UE GAMES: Saturnalia; Crasimoff's World; Explorers of Orion, Lands of the Crimson Surs, Aes; Mark of Choos; Uniamed Land; Version

*007 Mr C J McCarthy 39A Seaview Road, Llscard, Wallesey, Merseyside 1.45 4QN GAMES: Starglobe 1; Star Empires 1; Vorcon Wars 19; Sananalia; Fleet Man-oewers: P107

*008 Scott Macfariane 2 Broomside Terrace, Costorphine, Edin-burgh EH12 71.2 GAMES: Vorcon Wors 60; Super Vorcon

*009 Paul Davidson 51 Waterloo Road, Prestwick, Ayrabire, SCAMES: Vorcon Wars 60 (Commander PEPISH); Arcadia; Conquest

*816 Key Wasey 9 Clarkson House, Maysoule Road, Bat-ternea, London SW11 2BP GAMES: Earthwood 39

#011 Ian Hudson
53 Deepmore Close, Alrewas, Nr Burronupon-Trent, Staffs
GAMES: Vorton Wars 65 (Commander
PESTTB); Super Vorton Wars 77 (Commander FRUGAD); World of Vergeance
(Ian's Invincibles or Bury St Edmunds)

*012 Gareth Evans 4 Whitelands Road, Thatcham, New-bury, Berkahire RG13 4AR GAMES: Arcadia 6 (Egg Groinsids)

*013 Mike Adams 774 Holmefield Road, Liverpool, Merse-yside LK9 3PQ GAMES; Vorcon Wars; Conquest; It's A Crime! 4 (Priesu)

#614 David Lane 23 Florence Road, West Bridgford, Not-tingham N92 5HR GAMES: Cana Belli 5; Player 16

★615 Martin Higgins Wallesey Road, Wallesey, Merseyside L44 2AG GAMES: Vorcon Wars 72; It's A Crime! 4

*616 Cliff Frost 175 Queens Road, Leicestet LE2 3FN GAMES: Saturnatia; Arcadia; Ear-thuood 41; Kings of Steel 17; Arcadia; It's A Orima!; Swords and Shields

*017 Robin van den Yssel Smarugdlaen 172, 2332 BX Leideh, Zuid Holland, Netherlands GAMES: Votcon Wars 72 (Commander TREBIN); Starglobe 3 (The Dutchman)

w618 P Brunstan Cac Mari Pwn House, Thomastown, Merthyr Tydfil, Mid Glamorgan, South GAMES: It's A Crime! 2 (Death)

±019 Steve Vickers 26 Swinton Court, Harrogate HG2 0BB GAMES: Socce Star, Sanunalia; It's A Crimo! 4; World of Chaos

*020 Barnaby Dellar 11 Priory Grove, Stockwell, London SW8 GAMES: Starglobe 4

*021 Stephea Hoit 27 Rosemary Road, Sprowston, Nor-wich, Norfolk NR7 IER GAMES: Vorcon Wars 61 (Commands BRIDER): It's A Crimel 4 (Fighting Uruk-Hai)

#622 Kevin Pack Walnut Tree Lodge, 9 Kings Meadow Lane, Higham Ferrers, Northampton-shire NN9 8]E GAMBS: Earthwood; Saturnalia; Starglobe 4; Orion's Finger; It's A Crimel 3; Casus Belli; Aes

*023 Matthew Hanson 10 Deuby Lane Crescent, Grange Moor, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF4 4EB GAMES: Stargiobe 4 (SS Obsidian Fox);

≠624 Gavia Marshali 36 Spur Road, Orpington, Kent BR6 OOL GAMES: Vorcon Wars 71

Owen Whitehead *025 Owen Whitehead 213 Park Road, Barnsley, \$70 IQW GAMES: Aes ('Rillion' - E Side), Saturalia (Grendt of the Web), Enchirodon (Brothers in Arms), It's A Crime (Brothers in Arms), From The Mouth of Hell (Elf), World of Chaos (Rillion Kerr), Soccer Star (Morning Star RS League) *026 Damies Manning 12 Warden Road, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, B73 58 B GAMES: Sterglobe (SS Alvon), It's A Crims (Merry Mob)

*027 John Freen
12 Underdale Avenue, Shrewsbury,
Shropshire, SY2 5DY
GAMES: Starglobe Four (SS Broodsword
of the Guild Alliance), Varcon Wars 78
(Planog)

*828 John Kemp 9 Wold View, Caistor, Lincoln, LN7 GAMES: It's A Crime! 4 (New York Assassins), Ascadia 8 (Lord Cemaurus at Jihad City, P27)

±929 Milan Petronic 24 Dell Road, Kings Norton, Birming-ham, B30 2HZ GAME: Arcadia 13 (Drang Dur)

*030 JC Fowler II Beaconsfield Place, St Agnes, Cornwall, TR5 05Z GAMES: Starglobe Three, Arcadia 8.

*031 Kevia Edwards 52 Woodlands Road, Irchester, North-ants NN9 7BU GAMES: Vorcom 60, It's A Crimel 4, City

≠032 Jason Cottrell 17 Back Lane, Barrington, Cambs, CB2 GAMES: Sanonalia (Axil Taranus), Tyranny (PS)

033 Michael R Stannard 44 Hazrington Street, Cleethorpea, South Humberside, DN35 7AZ GAMES: Arcadia 10 (Mordran the Unknown at Seven Springs City,

*034Malcolm Sums 76 Mount Road, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 1YF GAMES: Soccet Star (Kilmare Oilers), Bradley's Football (Houston Oilers)

#835 Paul Davidenc #035 Paul Davidspu 51 Waterloo Road, Prestwick, Ayrshire, Scotland, KA9 1AA GAMES: Vorcon Wars 60 (Pepish), Arcadia 7 (Ped at Mariquendi City), Gon-quest (Anar Nation, maps 1813)

#636 S Davies 16 Clara Street, Ton-Peatre, Rhondda, Mid Glam, S. Wates, CF41 7HQ GAMES: It's A Crime! 4 (gang 315), Vor-con Wars 64 (Ghoush)

*037 S Wyatt 60 St Andrews Road, Shochuryness, Essex, SS3 9]] GAMES: Vorcon Wars 13 (Prifun), Var-con Wars 78 (Sathal), It's A Grime! 4 (Mer-cranics), Kings of Steel (Woodland 4 Hirans)

20 Inglis Road, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3HU GAME: Arcodia 12 (player 17)

*039 Jason Huggins 35 Gurratts Lane, Banstead, Surrey, SM7 2ED GAME: Saturnalia (Vetrex)

So ends another Diplomatic Directory

-don't forget to send your applications to our chief Diplomat at:

PBM DIRECTORY, BRENDON KAVANAGH, CRASH, PO BOX
10, LUDLOW SHROPSHIRE,

n

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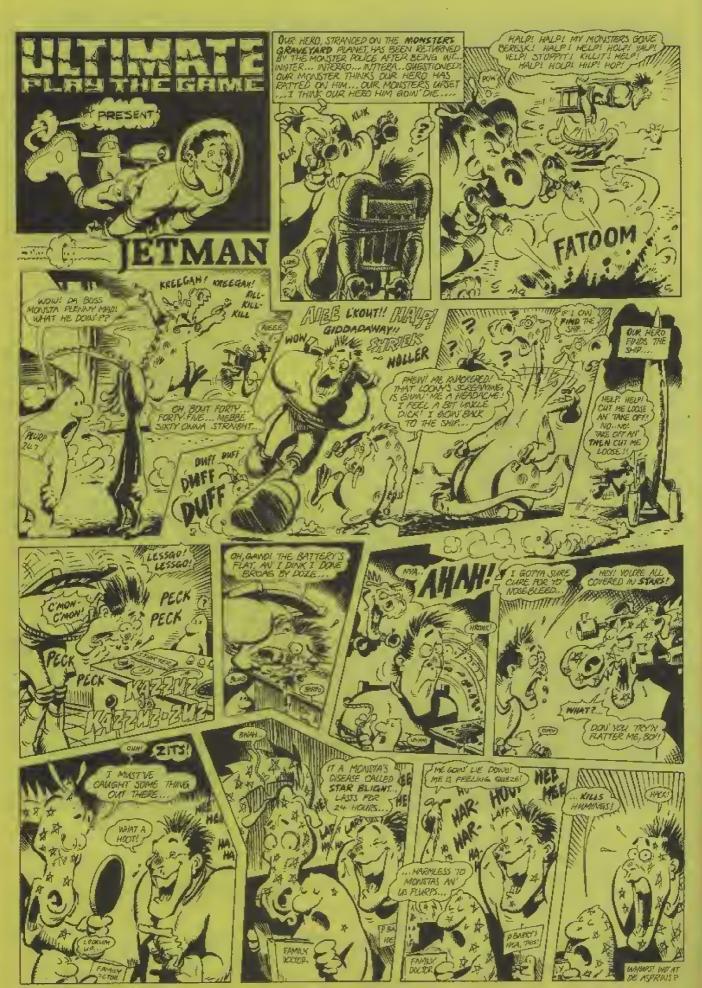


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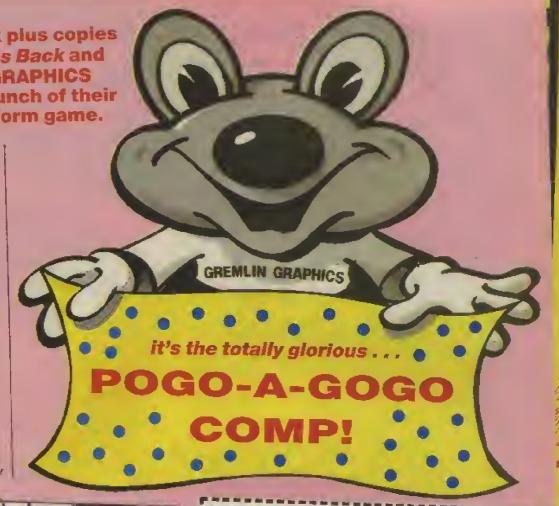
Win a Pogo Stick plus copies of *Thing Bounces Back* and help GREMLIN GRAPHICS celebrate the launch of their wacky new platform game.

Sproing manie has struck CRASH Towers! 'It's most peculiar,' said an official Comps Minion, 'ever since the team have seen Thing been leaping and bouncing around like little lambs!'

Yes folks, for once even ageing Lloyd has joined in the fun – have you ever seen a push bike with springs?

'Wheeeee, such fun,' said Art Maestro Oli, bouncing into view, hurriedly giving chase to a bottle of niffy orange ink that had somehow got caught up in – Ed's customised swivel chair as it, with he, bounded down the stairs.

Meanwhile Ben, Mike and Paul fight over the Space Hopper found in the attic each claiming that they found it first and so they deserve the first go. That is until the El Grosso Eddy rolls in and decides he quite fancies a go. He approaches this in his usual sublle, quiet, retiring style roaring. 'Minel I want a go, and I want it NOW!' At which point the rest dive for cover as he leaps upon the poor





Space Hopper and bounces off in to the sunset.

Meanwhile I, your humble Comps Minion, have nothing to join in with. No-one ever spares a thought for me. (C'mon, we're talking real deep sympathy here). The only person that cares is the voluptuous Sue Quinn from Gremlin Graphics who, our of the kindness of her heart, sent me a couple of pogo sticks, and now I can be seen bouncing down Ludtow Highstreet – a regular little tourist attraction.

However, as Mummy Minion is a bit past the pogo-ing age, I've got one spare and I'm giving it away! From me to you. Because I'mso nice. And Hove you. Honest. Well, it's not going to be that easy – time to call all those dormant brain cells into action and sort out this spot the difference puzzle first.

The winner will receive a brand new Pogo stick and a copy of Thing Bounces Back, the amzringly crazy Gremlin Graphics game (see review on page 14). Copies of the game willtalso go off to 50 lucky runners up. Spot all ten differences in picture B, ring them, and post it off to:

BOUNCING BACK COMP, CRASH, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB to arrive no later than 25 June, Okay? Boting, sproing, bounce, bound, weccernment



CRASH BOUNCING BACK COMPETITION

Postcode ..



90

CRASH June 1987

8

WINNERS & PRIZES

In Issue 39 we ran four competitions. Contestants in Imagine That, the design-a-game effort for DOMARK, will have to wait a bit longer. The many entries have been sent to DOMARK for their perusal, and we eagerly await the outcome. The Ferguson/CRASH Mappers' comp doesn't close for another week yet, so more news next issue.



BUTCHER THAN BUTCH

ADVANCE were offering the winner of this competition a Ghettob-laster, a Butch Sweatshirt and headband and a copy of the game. So, the noisy and well-clothed person is Paul Kitchener from Bottesford, Notts NG13 OBA, while the second prize goes to Mark Shaw from Harwich, Essex, and third goes to David Sallis of Irby in the Wirral, Merseyslde, 50 runners up each receive a copy of the game:

Kelth Sanders, Worcestershire, DY13 BRS; Andrew Patrick, Castletown, Isle of Man; Steven Rowell, Type and Wear, NE38 ST JS; Peter Tidmarsh, Merseyside, L11 18W; David Windell, Kent, TN15 DDH; Tony Malaghan, Lanarkshire, M.I. 5 PS; Colin Chung, Islington, London; C Jehnson, Derby, DE7 28X; DE6mundson, Lanca, B86 9HD; Robert Onden, Harts, CM22 5AF; Marcello Bortalino, London, M16 5BG; DerenJones, Blackpool, Lanca; Stephen Murphy, Norwich, NR7 9DY; R J Palmer, Shrop-

shire, SY2 5EB; Darren Martin, Hereford, HRI 1RS; J Holloway, Mants, PO4 9AA; Robert Lines, Hants, PO12 20W; Ivor McKee, N Humberskie, HU128BG; Richard K Ceathoven, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, NE5 2HJ; Adam Lumber, Avon, B317 4LU; J Tomkinson, Birmingham, B43 BPA; Alistair Scott, Edinburgh, EH127DF; David Forsythe, Foresthill, London, SE23 2JL; B Gibson, Dundee, DB5 3PL; Wayne Miller, Wallsall, WS3 3HD; Paul Bishop, W Midlands, WS10 7NF; Sturet Ives, Norfok, NR7 9NY; Delroy McQueen, London W12; Dowid Horton, Wolverhampton, WV6 9TO; Richard Horton, Wolverhampton, WV6 9TO; Richard Hotton, Wolverhampton, WV6 9TO; Richard Horton, Wolverhampton, WV6 9TO; Richard Horton, Waller, S. 187 2JF; Jude Hurley, Gwant, NP3 2DC; Wayne Bavanport, Irlam, Manchester, Gary Phillips, Wohenhampton, WV111HE; R J Wade, Stafts, ST3 TNX; Mark Bruce, Essex, Id10 187; Crash Reader, Gloucestershire, GL52 BDY; Phillip Killen, London NW3; Crash Reader (I), Walford, Herts, Mafhew Buxton, Kent, OA15 9A2; Richard Hibbort, Cheshire, SK15 3ND; Simon Firth, Lincoln, LN6 8SP; Collis Price, WA1 4LW, Russell M Judd, Hord, Essex, Matthew Holland, S Glamorgan, C66 10E; James Griffiths, Cheshire, WA1 3 0AY; Haroon Siddique, Middesex, TW3 2 NU; Peter Taylor, Shropshire, SY10 7LC.



BAZOOKA BILL'S TROUSERS

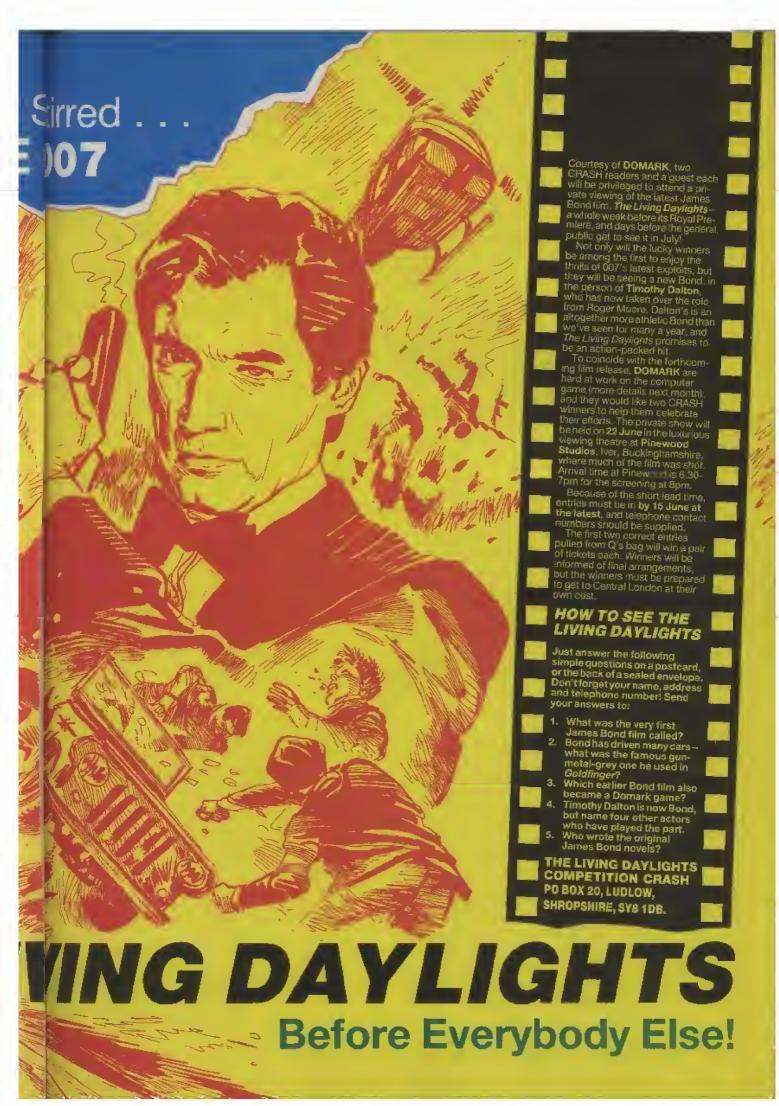
MELBOURNE HOUSE took aleaf out of ex-Ed Graeme Kidd's shoes (forgive the mixed meaphor) and had a pair of Doc Marten boots and a pair of combat trousers to give away together with one of our CRASH T-Shirts. The winner is Gavin Horne from Hotyport, Maidenhead in Berks (incidentally with the following sizes: Footsize; 9, Waist: 32, Inside leg: 29)!

40 runners up each receive a

40 runners up each receive a copy of Bazooka Bill.

Paul Winnard, Co Durham, SR8 1PR; M P Sims, Kent, CT1 1YF; Gary Baker, Surrey, GU24 0LT; Jonathan Wright, Berkshire, R611 2LH; Paul Tagg, Herts, SG14 2ED; Thomas Roach, Berkshire; SL4 5DT; Mark Fletcher, Cleveland, TS103ND, James Sallows, Beds, LU6 3TA, Jerome Kringle, Cheshire, S18 1LJ; Billy Barrett, Kent, TN23 2XY; Marc Hanmore, Isle of Wight, PO38 60T; Ian Pope, Kent, BR67 75E; F Dougles, Plymouth, PL3 4EW; Simon Croft, Staffs, DE13 8PZ; Michael Armstrong, Cumbrie, C427KD; Jenethen Adamson, Co Ducham, SR8 2NG; Nicholas Styli-Roussoft, Herts, WD1 58L; Steven Eyers, Herts, SG12 0PY; Chris Beck, Rotherham, S61 2JR; Justin Crisp, Lincolnshire, PE8 1UI); K Parsons, W Yorkshire, BD41 90L; Robert Allen, W Sussey, BH16 3PJ; Steven Irvarg, Cumbrie, CA2 4BY; Andrew Lewis, Warcs, DY12 1DA. Neil Penh, Liverpoid, L11 2UD; James Godberr, Oorsel, BR12 6PS; Kevin McCofferty, N Irvaled, BT47 2BY; Dennis McEnaney, Bford, Essey, L Marples, Chesterfield, S44 8UD; Dorck Cooper, Leicoster, LE1 DG8U, Brenden Fisher, Derbyshire, DE5 3TB; Matthew Casson, Devon, Exicester, LE1 DG8U, Brenden Fisher, Derbyshire, DE5 3TB; Matthew Casson, Devon, Exicester, AB5 3YR; Timothy Stone, Winchoombe, Gos; Stephen Temilisson, Lenes, FYY 7DY; Huw Bucknell, N Humberside, DN14 9HT; Mark James, Midfothar, EH14 7LX.





THE FILL-COLOUR

WIN A FERGUSON MONITOR, SPECTRUM LUS TWO AND

For the third and final time, those generous people from reasons, famous for their televisions and monitors, are offering CRASH readers the chance to win an MC05 Monitor and the necessary interface to link it up to a Spectrum, And to show just as willing, we've thrown in another Spectrum+2 for the outright winner of this competi-tion to celebrate the Adventure

Trail EXTRA.
The MC05 is a very neat piece of equipment, allowing you to enjoy a first class colour display for your games, and it also dou-bles as a telly—so when you tire of searching drawers, picking up keys and using passcards, a prod of a button, a twiddle of a knob, and you can tune in to East Enders.

As you can imagine, this kind of technology doesn't come cheap – the Monitor and interface would normally set you

back around £245, and when you add in the Spectrum ±2, you're talking in the region of £375.

To win this prize all you have to do is write down the correct answer to the six following CRASH Adventure Trail ques-tions on the back of a postcard (or outside of a sealed envelope)

and send it to us at: ADVEN-TURE EXTRA COMP, CRASH, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROP-SHIRE SYB 1DB to arrive no later than 25 June. First correct entry out of the boot of Roger Kean's Deux Cheveaux wins the Monitor, Interface and Comput-

er. The next ten runners-up will each get CRASH Hats and T shirts for being clever - and lucky.

- Name Hewson's 'gem' of a text-based adventure. Godzilla in Kent? Whoever
- could be the author?

- could be the author?
 If you saw Vran, which trilogy would you be in?
 Type in Frodo's birthday -which game's that?
 Pete Cooke of Tau Cetifame wrote which of these adventures?
 a) Soouthall
 - a) Snowball b) Urban Upstart c) Bored of the Rings
- Name the three games com-prising Lavel 9's famous tril-

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nock-bottom prices to all pur customers. No one can match us in performance and price.

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IINE

with Philippa Irving





Trinity term has arrived, and in the glorious spring weather the returning students are spreading themselves out on college lawns in a determined effort not to do any work. Meanwhile, those who have Finals in – ulp – seven weeks are contemplating the attractive properties of Magdalen Bridge as they finally realise that the last bit of work they did was to read helf a Penguin introduction in their second term three years ago. Oxfordings to the gentle sound of Finalists plunging into the isls and Japanese. Constitute at least the type of the configuration and finalists of the second
One thing all least that won't be keeping me from my wonderful revision timetable (and I've got a new one now, I got fed up with the old one) is the pestime which distracted me constantly in my second year two years the pestime which distracted me constantly in my second year two years ago; playing the latest computer game releases. I may still load up an old one, but I know what my tried and tested favourites are like so the compulsive interest and urgency isn't there. Elite, Doomdark's Revenge, Uridium and others aren't going to go away and are there to play when I have more time. As for games like Marsport, Dun Darach and Heavy on the Magick, I've come close to solving those after many dedicated and absorbing hours of play. But in the last six months I haven't bought a single Spectrum game. I intend to get Starglider sooner or later, and I'll be buying The Professional Adventure Writer when I have enough money to spare, but two pieces of software in six months when I used to buy three a month isn't an impressive total. The reason is simple; aimost pothing I've seen recently bas interested me enough to part with my nothing I've seen recently has interested me enough to part with my

limited financial resources.
It's hardly worth re-iterating what every Spectrum gamesplayer must be well aware of these days, that the amalgamation of smaller, innovative companies into big multi-nationals has resulted in a collapsing of standards from underneath. By thet I mean that the programming of a game may be as excellent as a 48K machine with attribute blocks trying to look like a dedicated arcade machine can be, but the content - the game and the ideas underneath the on-screen appearance – has drained away. Someone, I suppose, must buy these film and TV licensed games. I presume, in fact, that they must be a really commercial concern for the producers or there would be no point in making them. Occasionally a

media licence has resulted in a good game, but on the whole these types of product are being turned into marketing exercises. The cynicism of the big companies is appailing; they must know there's nothing artistically or intellectually satisfying about these pieces of software, but 1 should imagine that if they shift a reasonable number of units then such considerations are irrelevant. erations are irrelevant.

erations are irrelevant.

There were always nelf games, but in the past one found honestly bad products like the classic among turkeys, The Great Space Race, and weedy platform games with improbable scenarios produced from someone's back bedroom. It used to be much more common, two years ago, for a game to fall down on presentation and programming rather than imaginative input. I am interested in computer games as self-justifying entertainment; works of art, if you use the word in a broad, unpretentious sense. Part of the art is entertaining the player—the plays of Shakespeare are judged not only on the beauty of their poetry but their ability to entertain an audience in the theatre—a part of it is the visual design and something of the quality or imagination in the coding itself. Starglider is a game with imaginative coding, and so were Elite and Kniight Lore in their day.

their day.

'Elegance' is the word I would use to describe the aesthetic effect of programming like we see in Marsport and the Mike Singleton games. Unless a game is designed from the start with the Spectrum in mind, and with an idea which is going to be a computer game and not anything else, we will not see software with these qualities. Theoretically there should be nothing to stop designers taking a theme from a film or television programme and using it to build a computer scenario, but in practice this seems to paralyse the creative abilities.

Wargames are the last bastion of the old-style bad games. I am unlikely ever to find myself reviewing a film license in Frontline, despite the popularity of warfilms recently. This would be a good thing if the standard of presentation and programming of wargames was higher! In the meantime, I ought to be grateful. My purse and leisure time (which ought to be revising time) are now freer than they used to be.

BISMARCK

Producer: PSS Price: £9.95

This game occupies a position somewhere hazily between strategy counter-moving and simula-tion, it is in PSS's familiar housestyle, as opposed to what seems to be their 'imported' style; that is, we have slick machine code programming, nice presentation terms of rather bland and pretty of rather bland and pretty graphics, and the admittedly handy 'com-box'.

The arcade sequence, which is

predictable from this description is not, in this case, an optional frill is not, in this case, an optional frill. It attempts to occupy a central position in the game, and justifiably so when you consider the scenario; it concentrates on the part played in World War II by the Bismarck – one of those unsinkable ships which inevitably go down. Historically the Bismarck fived up to the tradition set by the Titanic, and the gameplay of this computer simulation of the brief serving life of the 'pride of the Kriegsmarine' does its best to be authentic in this respect. authentic in this respect

The Bismarck was launched into The Bismarck was faunched into active service on 18 May 1941 and sunk by the flagship of the British home fleet, King George V, on 27 May. It was trying to head towards the mid-Atlantic, where it would keep the British battleships busy and allow the companying spire the service that service the service the service that serv and allow its companion-ship, the Prince Eugen, to attack the mer-Prince Eugen, to attack the merchant convoys safety. Before it could break out into the open ocean it was barraged not only by half the British navy, who had intercepted its radio messages and were able to track its position accurately, but by alr attack. There is a detailed and well-narrated account of the Bismarck's nineday reign in the rulebook, which sets the scene admirably and indi-

vidualises the various British ships which appear on the screen.

The map shows western Europe, iceland, and a portion of the North Allantic. If you accept the default option to play the German side, it shows very little else when the game starts; the Bis-marck, a small square with a cross marck, a small square with a cross on it, awaits orders at the top of the screen. Although the surrounding ocean is teeming with British battleships, convoys and alcraft carriers, the German player is only intermitantly made aware of their positions.

There are loons on the map, in the form of a flag and windsock, representing the command centre and weather station of whichever

side you're playing. The weather centre can always be accessed with the com-box and shows what the weather conditions across the map are; a pattern of clouds, reminiscent of those new trendy electronic weathermaps, appears superimposed over Europe. If you really want to imitate the television weather forecast on your Spectrum, successive keypresses call up a prediction of where the cloud will be any number of hours later. Cosmetically this is an attractive Cosmetically this te an attractive feature, and the theory is that the German player ought to keep the Bismarck travelling under cloud to minimise the danger from British air attack.

The command centre can only be accessed when it flashes. For the German player it reports U-boat sightings of British ships, which come regularly and are very helpful in attempting to avoid their path. The British player is told of radio intercepts, which pinpoint com-box is movement but it also accesses the unit's battlescreen.

This is where the famous - or notorious - PSS arcade sequence begins to look surprisingly like a serious attempt at simulation. The battlescreen, which unlike conventional arcade sequences, can be accessed at any time, is split into three sections. The upper part of the screen shows a featureless view of the sea in front of the ship and the enemy if there is one in the vicinity. Other ships appears as highly detailed outlines on the horizon. The middle section is a complex bank of icons and information, which are used to control ship movement and to fire the weapons. The lower part of the screen shows a diagramatic rep-resentation of the ship from the side on; as soon as you start get-ting shelled the point of this dis-play becomes alarmingly apparent as fire spreads through the hull the engines and fuel

manoeuvring the enemy ships, and certainly, if you let the Bis-marck sit there and take substantial damage from an opponent, then you will inevitably lose. Somewhat artificially, hits to the enemy ship are displayed above hits to your own. The Bismarck can take 99 points of damage before sinking, but as shells hit, fires start around the ship and unless these

around the ship and unless these are dealt with you risk having an explosion in the fuel tanks before you're actually shot to pieces.

A separate icon allows the player to move a fire-fighting crew to the scene of the blaze, but in the meanting the active the series of the series with the series. meantime the enemy may still be firing. Am I being too exacting to point out that on a battleship like the Bismarck, which carried a crew of 2,300 men, it was hardly necessary to stop firing to run with a bucket of water to put out a fire? Probably not, because it puts the player at a disadvantage. The enemy doesn't pause to repair its fire damage. Juggling between combat and fire-fighting mode can become wearisomely fiddly. The Bismarck is attempting

either to reach the southern edge of the map reasonably intact, or to get to Brest with at least one sunk British ship to its name. This sounds easy and is extremely and depressingly difficult, as the his-torical disadvantage the Bismarck was under is ruthlessly repro-duced. The ship only has 99 hit points and no way of recovering them once lost, several at a time, to enemy shells. It follows there-fore that the Bismarck ought to avoid any combat if at all possible and head for the south edge of the map, despite an injunction in the rules to keep clear of battleships but sink everything else, in practice, it's very difficult to avoid being caught up in battle. Obvious British tactics unfortunately encourage a kamikazi mentality for sending weaker ships to certain death against the Bismarck can do a significant amount of permanent darnage. There ought to be penalties for suicidal strategies; as it is, you get 'A British Victory' and a respectable percentage for scuppering all of your ships except one which was on the point of exploding from fire damage. It's good to note at least that actually shooting

at your own ships is not tolerated. The game proceeds in real time. with a choice of pace between fast, medium and slow. Fast is not particularly speedy, and there should be no reason to want to slow up what happens on the map screen. The quick pacing means that the game is unlikely to last for a long time, and that - to me -contributes to an impression of shallowness. Other players may

like a game which has fixed boundries and a definite resolution within the space of an hour. The rules come in a small high-

quality booklet and are nicely presented, there's an index table, illustrations of symbols used on the screen, and useful information about the military capabilities of the ships. All aspects of gameplay are clearly described in a meaningful sequence, and the historical overview is well-written and interesting. The standard of PSS documentation seems to be improving.

Bismarck is a smoothly-presented. sented, undernanding game which tries to make an arcade sequence work as an integral part of a wargame. Of that type, a type PSS are creating, it is successful. I remained unconvinced that this particular style of wargame has anywhere to go; it's too glib, it seems too much of a pale reflection of what it's attempting to blend, and it doesn't offer enough of a long-term challenge. But there's a lot packed into Bismarck, and this may be a game which younger and inexperienced wargamers will enjoy.

PRESENTATION 87%

Options offered are comprehensive, the packaging is attractive (though PSS have gone over to those boring double cassette boxes now) and the on-screen impression is polished.

RULES 85%

Not voluminous, but detailed in all Important respects, well-presented, and helpful.

PLAYABILITY 80% Very easy to get into.

AUTHENTICITY 79%

The introductory material in the rulebook creates an atmosphere. but aspects of the simulationsequence are unconvincing.

OPPONENT 74%

As the British the computer is vic-ious, as the Germans, it knows its own victory conditions.

VALUE 70%

Depends what you're looking for --some people may find it's all over too quickly for their money.

GRAPHICS 80%

The unexciting appearance of the map-screen is offset by very pretty touches, such as the weather forecast, the icons and the ship out-

OVERALL 75%

Well produced, with some scope for varied play; not a long-term challenge





the Bismarck's position. radio sightings don't start happenradio signings don't start nappening until about halfway through the
game, so there's little the British
player can intelligently do until
then, beyond making sure the
navy is in a fairly central position
ready to steam lowards the Bismarck when it shows up

The main function of the com-box is, as with other games in this style, to give movement orders to the units. The German player only has control over the Bismarck, while the British player can give orders to a number of battleships and an aircraft carrier. The only order which can be given via the

When the Bismarck sails near an enemy unit it appears on the map screen, and even if the other side decides not to engage in battle the ship will probably be visible if you access the battlescreen. Once in view, you can attempt to close on the enemy by selecting the appropriate icon, and when it's in range of your guns you can fire.
There seems to be little skill involved in the actual firing. It's a matter of pointing the viewfinder in the right direction and pressing the button, discharging an apparently limitless quantity of shell. PSS tell me that the real skill lies in out-

ZULU WARS

Producer: CCS Price: £8.95

This latest game from CCS takes a little-exposed conflict between the British and the Zulu tribes towards the end of the nineteenth century for its scenario, which i can't help welcoming as a change from the endless re-enactments of

the Second World War which, after four months of editing Frontline, are beginning to make me feel as if I'm trapped in a recurring time

On the other hand, there's little point in novelty for its own sake. Each game must stand on its own merits, independent of previous releases. Zulu Wars uses its



scenario to work some interesting and novel elements Into the gameplay, and with two separate programs, one on either side of the lape, it would seem to offer value for money too: but it's let down, as far too many wargames are, by sheddy unprofessional programmen.

There are two scenarios which must be loaded separately, and one – the easier, *Umlalazi* – is based on a battle which just might have happened, but didn't. Although I'm all for speculative wargaming, this suggests to me that the potential of the historical material is limited somewhat; particularly when it turns out that the start-up conditions of the battle on the first side of the tape have had to be tweaked considerably to give the Zulus any chance at all. *Zulu Wars* might be more accurately inted Variations on the Zulu Wars'!

Still, it's an academic exercise anyway to believe that little boxes on a computer screen bear any thing more than a numerical resemblance to what really hap-pened on the battlefield, and athough I'm strongly in favour of as much historical backing in the packaging as possible to assist this act of faith, an approximation is always inevitable. The leaflet that comes in the standard double cassette box describes the politi cal situation in Africa which led up to the outbreak of the wars, and to the outbreak of the wars, and the specific conditions of each scenario, in a concise but adequate way. The Zulu Wars were caused by British imperialistic ambitton in the twentleth century, or rather the curious British indictions and the second services of the second services. belief prevalent then that only they were competent to keep the peace in Africa; on this occasion, between the Boers of The Transvaal and the Zulus of Zululand, which was recognised by Britain as a sovereign state. In 1879, the British moved into annexe Zululand and met a well-organised native army which, despite its strength and tactics, ended up as cannon-fodder to the technological might of the Empire. This out-come was entirely predictable and although, as I say, the balance has been unhistorically redressed, this is still one of those wargames it's difficult to lose.

For reasons which become apparent once play has started, and is for once excusable, there is no two-player option or choice of side. The player takes command

of the British forces, under General Chelmsford in Ulundi and Major-General Creatock in Umidiazi, against the computer, which controls the Zulus. Play takes place on a small scale, the screen representing, in curiously distorted perspectives, Individual buildings and foliage on the battlefield. The units themselves are shown not as traditional, symbolic boxes but as a matrix of little stick men which dwindle, rather alarmingly, as damage is incurred.

damage is incurred.

In the first scenario the player has 13 blocks of stick men to march against the Zulus, and they're often difficult to manoeuvre through closely-placed obstacles, or indeed past each other. The clumstness of the British movement is irritating only before it becomes apparent that it's part of the gameplay; historically, if represents the regimentation and rigid formation of the British troops, and in game terms it gives the Zulu forces an advantage to compensate for the player's superior firepower.

The units have a fixed efficiency rating and a fluctuating morale rating, and a number of movement points based on their efficiency. When each unit is highlighted in turn by the computer the name of the regiment is displayed along with a bar-chart of these simple statistics, and reference to a list in the rules gives the exact number of men in it. This list, which even tells the curious what the regiment's present designation is, is the sort of helpful, easy-reference feature that I'm always glad to see in a rulebook.

feature than the line and so deficiently levels are offered, which simply determine how many hundreds and thousands of Zulus you get thrown at you. At Full Battle level the figure is 40,000 spear-waving warriors against 5,300 infantry and 900 cavalry! Once the difficulty level has been selected, the games start automatically; and so do the impressions of tackiness and awkward programming. The player is treated to a demonstration of the appalling scrolling routine, which churns the map laboriously back and forth across the screen in the most incompetent and fillchering way I've see on a recent game, But this is a wargame, not Uridium, and so, generously recognising this is trivial – a matter of aesthetics, really – the player might be annoyed to discover this ugly

routine is the only way of viewing the map available. It cannot be scrolled under the player's control, only by a single keypress which gives a repetition of the guided tour.

Movement and combat for the British is combined into the same phase, and the computer selects units in turn for attention. Fortunately, a selected unit can be passed until later. The units are all crowded together and getting in each other's way at the start of the scenario, so this system becomes laborious and fiddly, but also creates an atmosphere of inflexibility which no doubt reflects the battle tactics of the British forces at the time; and the system itself is quick enough to operate once you've got used to its idiosyncracies.

All units can fire once in a round, and can engage in close combat as they come into contact with the enemy. As the game progresses, the physical size of the units diminish because of losses and this affects directly – in a visible way – how much damage they can do by firing into the Zulus. Gunfire is the player's most effective weapon against the Zulu hordes, because they have no guns themselves and so no way of retaliating in the same combat. Close combat can prove dangerous, although the British still have the advantage over the Zulus; the morale of a unit starts to decrease if they take more losses than their opponent, and the lower the moral, the more likely defeat becomes.

Once movement and combat is

Once movement and combat is completed to the player's satisfaction, the return can be ended and the Zulus begin to move. This is when it becomes obvious why the game is one-player only, with no choice of sides; the Zulu movement is radically different from the British. Instead of attacking in clumsy rectangles, they swarm individually onto the screen and around the British regiments like ants; they start in struggling waves but soon break up to envelope the player's units, one stick man at a time. This is the novel element of Zulu Wars, and it represents a fair attempt at figures wargaming on the computer in a limited, one-sided way, it would be difficult for a human player to move these large numbers of figures individually unless the overall standard of game design were very much better than this. But Zulu Wars has to

be noted as one of the few games which makes use of the computer's abilities to do something a bit more imaginative than calculating damage.

The British victory conditions are simply to kill all of the Zulus, and it is supposedly the Zulus aim to kill the leader in each scenario. This is something they do not pursue, however, with any enthuslasm and the only threat to the British lies in the sheer numbers of the enemy. The Zulu pattern of attack is predictable and always identical – they come in from three sides of the map in an attempt to envelope the British, then move in to surround each regiment – and, after a few attempts, I came to realise that there's little scope for variety of factics. The battle formation of the troops is predetermined and there's too little space to move imaginatively, for within three moves of the start you're so overwhelmed by the Zulus that it's just a case of wearing them down.

The programming is unacceptably inconsiderate in places – for instance, in the Zulu combat phase the program solemnly scrolls around to each British unit to decide whether it's under attack or not – and although it's never actually slow enough to make me reach for the plug, I am beginning to get depressed by the standard of some software lurned out professionally packaged by respectable companies. A computer-literate friend hacked into Zulu Wars for me on the suspicion that it was in BASIC, and came out with the conclusion that it looked like it had been put through a BASIC com-

It's playable enough, but has little depth and nowhere to go. The higher levels offer no extra complications, just more and more swarming Zulus to outlive. This game would have been more acceptable at a budget price.

PRESENTATION 39%

Abysmal scrolling and an overall shoddiness outweighs the acceptably straightforward orders sequence.

RULES 70%

Brief, but clearly set out with a couple of particularly useful notes.

PLAYABILITY 72%

The incompetent presentation only just fails to get in the way of playability, which is very enjoyable for the first couple of games.

AUTHENTICTY 70%

Although the author seems to have taken liberties with the historical set-up, the way the Zulus move is atmospheric and satisfying.

OPPONENT 65%

All the same they seem unaware of their own victory conditions.

VALUE 59%

Little lasting interest.

GRAPHICS 66%

Unambiguous as far as the units go, though the map looks slightly odd.

OVERALL 61%

Some interesting features, playable for an afternoon, badly programmed and unlikely to prove of lasting interest.



FORUM

I'm greatly encouraged by the volume and quality of mail I've been getting ever since I appealed to the nation. Quite clearly there are a great many wargamers out there who are enthusiastic about our special interest, and involved enough to write at length to Frontine. If only I were allowed more space, I could print a wider cross-section of your correspondence. Many people have asked if it would be possible to have a wargames chart, and thanks to the incredible kindness (they asked me to put that in) of my editor, there now will be. Check out the form on these pages and use your vote to help create a CRASH Wargamers' Top Ten each month.

HIDDEN INTELLIGENCE

Dear Philippa,

Your comments in the March issue of CRASH concerning the pros and cons of the computer wargame were very interesting, particularly your request for more information on the 'hidden rules'. My own view is that part of the appeal of these games is that they lack most of the verbiage normally

essociated with wargames rules. After all, how many real generals were provided with reams of statistics?

The most significant problem that has plagued every type of wargame is the ability of the participants to see everything that's happening together with the telepathic way that troops are able to respond to any new situation. Not only should the hidden forces be hidden from each other, both generals should often have only limited knowledge of the whereab-

outs of their own troops, especially in periods before the invention of the radio. The computer is the only medium with a reasonable chance of being able to incorporate such concepts but little has been done up to now, apart from using anonymous squares to hide the identity of units. I also find staring at the walipaper while my opponent makes his move rather tedi-

The only game that has come close to what I would like to see in a computer wargame is Doomdark's Revenge, Just imagine an historical scenario incorporating the same features. The 'armies' would become divisions, or corps, each having a commander with his own 'personality'. All the problems connected with hidden movement (and many others) would be solved in ways that no wargamer could have envisaged a few years ago. All we need now is someone with the time and inclination to turn the dream into reality.

Yours strategically – Bryan Hurt.

I'm a great admirer of Mike Singleton's games and it astonishes me that, with several prolific and professional software houses specialising in wargames, no-one has produced a genulnely artistic, Spectrum-stretching game like Doomdark's Revenge. Lagree that limited intelligence is one thing a computer can handle very easily, although I don't know if lack of communication between generals

LEAVE HITLER ALONE

and troops could be made to work

Dear Philippa,

I would like to make a plea through your pages to the software companies producing wargames.

Almost exclusively software houses stick with the old faithfuls of WWII and Napoleonic periods, no doubt because they are the most popular and therefore commercial.

However, on receipt of each new release I and a few friends invariably study the battle or campaign in more detail, therefore widening our knowledge. I firmly betieve that releases covering less popular periods would inspire similar study (eg, Naseby, Six Day War, or Ancients).

betieve that reidases dovering less popular periods would inspire similar study (eg. Naseby, Six Day War, or Ancients).

So there it is; please, all you authors — give a little thought to other theatres and periods and let poor old Napoleon and Mr Hitler

have a temporary rest.

One other thing in parting. I would like to echo the sentiment expressed by Ally Hume in Issue 37 when he made e plea for a strategy games creator (I remember Argus Press advertising one for the C64 some time ago, would a conversion be in order?).

SK Jamison, Newtonabbey.

I'm most impressed that you research a wargame to play it. That sounds an excellent way of getting the most for your money, and compensating for scanty or unlimaginative background material in the rule book. On the subject of strategy game creators, Bob Kerr of Bury St Edmunds has written to say that he finds the 1983 Lothlo-

rien game Confrontation, which apparently has a very comprehensive set of user-definable options, to be ideal for this purpose.

CONCISE BUT...

Dear Philippa,

Just dropping a note about the game Samural you reviewed in the April CRASH. If its rules were 'concise and uninformative', why did you give them 90 percent? N Realson, London.

I wondered that tool Probably for the same reason that a tank from Tobruk wandered into Vulcan. There were a lot of typos in the April CRASH Frontline. Here is a correction:

RULES 60% Concise and uninformative.

BRIEFING

Doomdark's Revenge is an old game now, but it's still one of the best strategy games available for the Spectrum. Tony Beadon from Letchworth has written in with advice about one of its more asoteric elements, the crowns. The Crown of imiriel is to be found in the Hill of Haginoen, and should be taken by Luxor to any tower, where he will be told the position of the crown of Varenand; a useful fashion accessory which draws all the other characters you control to Luxor's position, magically. If you visit a tower with a crown in your possession you will be told the position of the next crown, and some of them have surprising and entertainling uses.

Severator you have sent strategies for the new R T Smith game Vulcan, including Frank David Beilby from Dencaster, Sandy Nook from Liverpool, and Mogens Laurisden all the way from Denmark. From their detailed letters, I'va collected some general tips to help you make a successful start on the game.

Forces should always be conserved, particularly the panzer divisions, and offensives should never be launched until all your forces are ready.

forces are ready.
It's always best to travel along roads, unless there's no alternative. Enemy units usually do. But beware of ambushes!

Attacks should be made from a position of strength by stacks of three or four units. But be careful about stacking too heavily in the face of Axis air superiority, as this leaves you vulnerable to enemy airpower.

Recordes are often more useful than air strikes.

Mountains make excellent defensive positions for dug-in and fortified infantry.

Allied tanks are scarce so should be used sparingly, they're particularly useful for attacking infantry units caught without cover.

Never allows units to run out of supply, as this lays them open to attack. To conserve supplies when fortifying, use a mixture of dig-in and hold commands.

If you're losing a battle, run for it!

THE NEW CRASH STRATEGY CHART!

Here it is folks, the chart you've been waiting for (your chance to engage in some strategic voting). Let us know your favourite five strategy programs, and enter a draw for £20's worth of software and a fabulous CRASH T-Shirt. Five runners-up will also receive a T-Shirt, so post those coupons today.

The following are r	ny five f	iavourite	strategy	games
in order of choice				

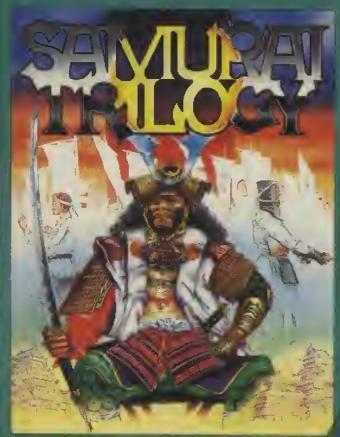
All order or eriores i i i
1.
2,
3,
4.
5
Name
Address
In the unlikely event that I win the $\Sigma 20$'s worth of software, would like the following games (not necessarily strategy!)

T-Shirt Size S M L

Completed coupons should be sent to PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB, to be received no later than June 10th 1987.

Software...





is an age in which honour was revered, from a time when grace and beauty were virtues, a class of warriors set themselves apart to dedicate their lives to a perfection in combat that in itself was an artivar, to a discipline of mind that became a religion. The attaining a such excellence required an extraordinary diligence in self-denial and training in order to achieve the utilizate accolade War Lord. Kendo, Kurate and finally Sazarrai are the tests that must be mastered before such honour can be bestowed.





that's out of this world



Welcome to the ultimate challenge! A two way test of skill and nerve — can you out manouvers the awesome egre and blast a path through the myriad of colourful bricks? Are your reflexes adopt exough to retrieve the spending missile, defekcied from its block shattering journey or regarditated contempteously from the ogress month?

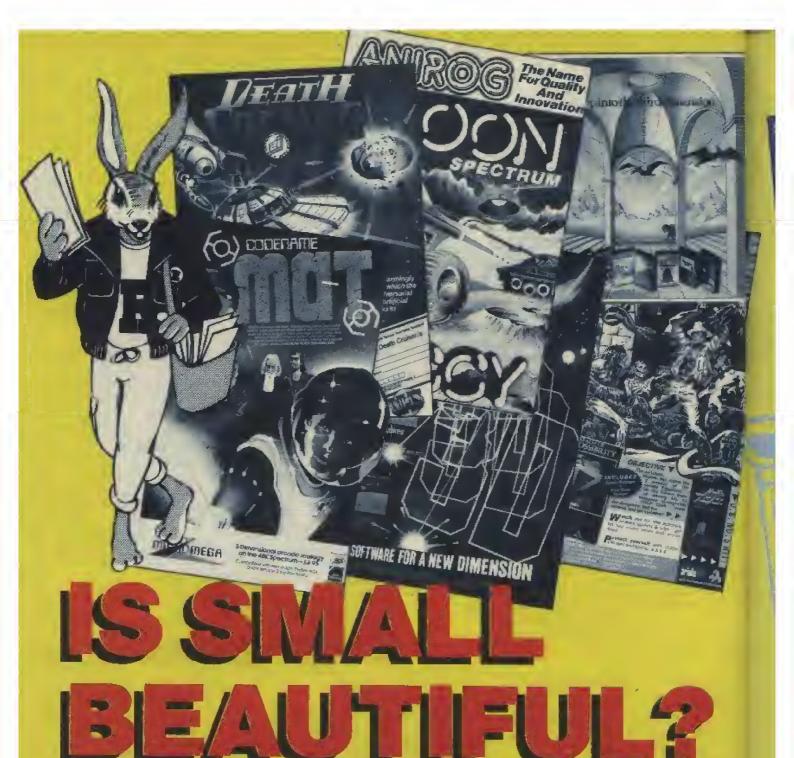






KRAKQUT CBM64/128 \$9.99 Tape \$14.99 Disk Spectrum \$7.99 Tape Amstrad \$9.99 Tape \$14.99 Disk MSX \$7.99 Tape

AUF WIEDERSEHEN MONTY CBM64/128 Amstrad 29.99 Tape \$14.99 Disk. Spectrum 57.99 Tape SAMURAL TRILOGY CBM64/128 Amstrad 59.99 Tape \$14.99 Disk. Spectrum 57.99 Tape



One-time reviewer and Playing Tipster ROBIN CANDY returns to the pages of CRASH to discuss the arguments for and against a software industry run and Marge distributors software houses.

licking through the pages of the very first issue of CRASH (February 1984), it soon becomes apparent that the number of software houses in operation in those far off days was greater than today's. Such names as Abacus. D.JL. Software, Starzene, and Doicoraced the pages. That month's top game (this was the pre-CRASH Smash era) was 3D Death Chase by Micromega, a company which went on to produce, several top-notch games, but disappeared as quickly as it had arrived.

Many of today's big names were either in

Many of today's big names were either in their infancy or non-existent - for instance, a

fledging Ocean had recently changed their name from Spectrum, and Firebird were a long way from their first release. The only really big way from their first release. The only really big software house of the time was Imagine, a company armed with the marketing power we take for granted nowadays (however the Liverpudian company were wound up for failing to pay their substantial advertising debts; and the rights to imagine's name and logo was eventually purchased from the Receiver by a rapidly growing. Ocean. In general, the software industry was a home-run affair controlled by enthusiasts rather than corporate husicessmen.

One of the advantages of a software industry run by larger companies is that there's no longer a need to sell via mail order; they have longer a need to self via mail order; they have the power to get into the chain stores and create a shop-based market. During the early Eighties most software was purchased through mail-order. Numerous classified advertisements fastooned the pages of advertisements fastooned the infamous '160% Machine Code.' Having sent the cheque or postal order, the customer their walted the customary 28 days ... but all too often it took slightly longer for the game to

often it took slightly longer for the game to appear.

When your box of delights did finally arrive, it often turned out that the product didn't live up to the advertisement's boasts – in fact the game was inevitably some poor clone of the Pacman or Donkey Kong types that were so popular in the arcades. One particular product which springs to mind is the motor racing simulation Formula One (Sprint Software) which was advertised as including a steering wheel for extra realism. When the game eventually turned up, after inquiries by the police into the software house's background, the so-called 'steering wheel' proved to be nothing more than an ashtray shaped plastic bowl, which was rolled along the top row of keys to steer the car from left to right.

Of course the real problem with mail order was the worry about whether you would actually receive your goods at all. Tales of companies folding after cashing customers' cheques were not uncommon, and there was little the public could do in this event, After the computer sales boom of 83/84, more special-

Some of the main Spectrum games-producing companies which existed in 1984 but that are either no longer with us, have been bought out, or have otherwise changed their circumstances dramatically:

Abacus (ceased trading) Addictive Games (Prism) Adventure International (US Gold)
An'F (Argus Press Software)
Ankog (stopped doing games)
Arcade Software (ceased trading)
Androg (stopped doing games) Atarisoft (stopped)
Automata (ceased trading),
Beyond (British Telecom)
Bug-Byte (Argus Press Software)
Carnell (Mastertronie) now development only)

Digital Fantasia (Adverture International then
US Gold)

DJL Software Research Crystal Computing (became Design Design

DJL Software (ceased trading) DK'tronics (now hardware only) Elephant (ceased trading)

Doric (became Dorcas, now seased trading).

Fantasy (originally called Quest, ceased trading).

Games Machine (ceased trading). Imagine (into receivership, sold to Ocean) Level 9 (Rainbird/British Telecom) Lyversoft (ceased trading)

Lothlorien (Argus Press Software) Melbourne House (Mastertrenic) Melbourne Flouse (Masterranic)
Micromania (csased trading)
Micromega (stopped doing games)
Mikro-Gen (Creative Sparks Distribution)
New Generation (Virgin)
Noble House (ceased trading)
Rhippe Associates (Ceased Trading) Phipps Associates (ceased trading)
Phipps Associates (ceased trading)
Poppysoft (ceased trading)
Postern (ceased trading)
Procom (ceased trading)
Quicksilva (Argus Press Software)
Pablis Argus Rabbit (Virgin)

R & R Software (ceased trading)

Richard Shepherd (ceased trading).

Richard Wilcox (absorbed by Ekte Systems).

Severn (ceased trading).

Silversoft (absorbed into CRL).

Softek (mostly operating with The Edge).

Starzone (ceased trading).

Terminal (ceased trading).

Ullimate US Gold). Visions (US Gold)
Vortex (US Gold)

created original high-quality games, but their parent company felt the returns were not high enough to justify to continuing in the games software market – a case of a company disappearing despite producing popular games. Smaller companies just can't compete with the marketing skills of the likes of Ocean and Firebird in order to actum lipancial success, some marketing skills of the likes of Ocean and Firebird. In order to ensure financial success, some software houses have resorted to selling their products through a third party. This is usually one of the bigger software houses, as in the case of Firebird and Realtime, Level 9 and Rainbird — in both cases, British Telecom are the driving force. To be fair to the larger companies though, this does allow the design teams to concentrate their skills on the end product rather than on how to sell it.

"In general, the software industry was a home-run affair controlled by enthusiasts."

The advantages and disadvantages of this The advantages and disadvantages of this industry structure are reasily summarised: software is now more easily available at specialist shops and chain stores; there's little risk of not getting your product after parting with your money; programmers don't have to worry about how to market games. There are of course disadvantages; hype can lead to raised expectations for a product which turns out to be sub-standard; smaller companies find it hard to compete; originality sometimes suffers because software houses don't always want to risk putting out a new game concept.

ist software shops opened and the big chain stores joined the market. This led to the even-tual decline of the mail order market, in August 63 Ian Sinclair of IJK (a company that

in August 83 an Sinciair of IJK (a company that produced games for the Oriciand BBC) wrote ... the public loves arcade games, while reviewers hate them, and original games have the opposite effect. Things haven't changed much, and although the success of many original games has proved that there is a niche for them, many of today's best-sellers are arcade conversions or variants on that theme. Arcade conversions are designed to entire the player to originals are designed to entice the player to part with money and flash up the 'Game Over' message as quickly as possible, ready for the next unwitting customer. When translating a next unwitting customer. When translating a program to a home computer format, the programmer strives to emulate the leatures that made the original successful. These usually consist of outstanding graphics, superb sound and an overall impression that a lot is happening on screen. Naturally such features swallow up memory, leaving little room to create any game 'depth'. Many arcade games lose their atmosphere when translated to a home computer; for instance, one of the attractions of Gauntiet was trying to find one more 10p before your character died!

"The bigger software houses seem to produce games that catch the eye rather than striving for originality."

Thus many arcade conversions sell well on appearances alone. Conversely the more complex arcade adventures, like those produced by Gargoyle Games and Hewson, manage to create a game with more behind it than zapping everything in sight – but usually at the expense of the graphics. This type of game can achieve a reasonable standard of graphics, but rarely as good as their arcade types. A case in point are two games by Garrelland. graphics, but rarely as good as their arcade rivals. A case in point are two games by Gargoyte/FTL. The first, *Marsport*, was an arcade adventure of great depth, and while its graphics were quite good, they eventually became boring. An arcade game by the same programmers, *Lightforce*, produced outstanding graphics and animation, while the game itself was quite straightforward.

If seems that outstanding gameplay coupled with great graphics is almost unobtainable.

What this is all leading up to is that the bigger software houses seem to produce games that catch the eye rather than striving for originality. Any new idea that sells well is quickly done to Any new idea that sells well is quickly done to death by the numerous clones that follow hard on its heels – just look at the number of martial arts titles available. When Ultimate's Kright Lora first appeared, it introduced an ingenious method of presentation. Since then the same style has been used on many games, ensuring a certain lavel of sales. Games which use these graphics are playing safe in much the same way that the Pacmanclones of yesteryear did. Much of the software industry is now run by highly efficient corporations, who controt the interests of smaller software labels. This means that the direction which new software takes is in the hands of a relatively small number of people. This includes the main distributors, who have selection boards to decide

number of people. This includes the main distributors, who have selection boards to decide whether a game is worth distributing – after all, you can only buy what's been released.

When Deus Ex Machina (a program devised by Mel Croucher) was released, the selection boards rejected it because it couldn't be easily categorised – despite the rave reviews it. the game did not do as well as it deserved.

These large companies are in the business to make a profit and to achieve maximum market penetration of their products. To do this money is poured into lavish advertising campaigns to promote products which often don't live up to the expectations raised by such marketing

strategies.

Licensing deals are currently all the rage, particularly if they're tie-ins with the latest hit movies. The product has to be released white the film is still firmly fixed in the public's mind, and by the time the advertising has been booked and the deal bought, there's little time as management of the scenario of the actual product. or money left to be spent on the actual product. As a result, the end product has had to be put together hurriedly, and is often a rather poor game with little connection to the film. Rambo was an average game which sold well because of the film te-in; in reality it was nothing more than a variant on the well-worn Commando-

The smaller software houses that do special-ize in original games without the need for te-ins don't get the financial rewards they deserve because they can't afford the lavish advertis-ing campaigns needed to promote their prod-ucts. Micromega was a software house that



JAPAN has a word for the



BASEBALL It's the most



HOGAN'S ALLEY Use your Zapper light gun to shoot

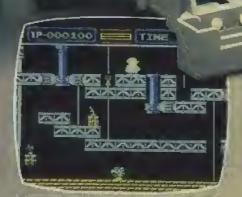


CLU CLU LAND The evil Sea Urch has hidden the underground mystery maze





DUCK HUNT There's a dock in the air! You've only got three shors to bag this duck. And if you miss, even your dog laughs at you in this last-action Zapper Gun game.



GYROMITE You've got to keep R.O.B.'s gyroscope spinning to help a mad scientist de-activate the dynamite in his laboratory in order to play this action-packed game!



GOLF Choose your clobs, Control your swings. Select the angle of every shot, it's Mintendo GOLF and these's not a video golf game on par with it anywhere:

For the first time in the UK direct from Japan comes Nintendo, the home entertainment system with genuine arcade-quality graphics. Nintendo make 2 out of 3 of all the world's coin-op arcade machines, so they know what they to doing. And already, in Japan 942 million homes have a Nintendo home entertainment system.

Now you can enjoy the amazing 52 colour 3-D graphics of Nintendo. (On most home computers, you've been lucky to get 16 colours until now!) Nintendo's superb graphics give the games a convincing true 3-D feel with actual shadows which add depth to the characters.

Already there are 27 Nintendo Game Paks available in the UK and more are being added to the software library all the time. But there's even more to Nintendo than the best games you've ever seen...

Nintendo Entertainment System

For the first time home entertainment enters a new dimension.

Because when you own a Nintendo entertainment system you also get a buddy to play with, a Robotic Operating Buddy to be exact (or R.O.B. to his friends). He's your partner. Seal him next to you, send him signals from your ty screen and together you can tackle the enemy.

The Zapper Gun
Never before has there been a video gun of this calibre. The astonishing light sensitive Zapper Gun lets you shoot moving targets with pinpoint accuracy from up to 16 feet! If you think you're a sharp shooter the Zapper Gun will test your skill to the full.

Nintendo or Super Nintendo, the choice is yours.

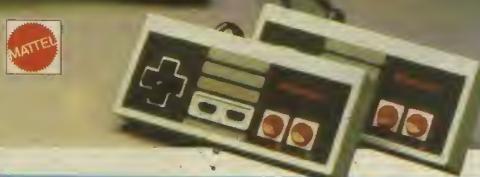
Which set do you want? NINTENDO's superb high-quality action costs £129.99* for control deck, mains transformer, two hand controls, and one free Super Mario Bros Game Pak Zapper Gun, R.O.B., and two free games, Gyromite and Duck Hunt,



Nintendo'

(b Çrchir

Nintendo



Where you can buy Nintendo

Nintendo is available from the stockists featured. If you have any questions or have difficulty obtaining the product, write to HiTech Electronic Services Ltd., Unit 2B, 200 Rickmansworth Road, Watford WD1 7JS. Or 'phone: 09232 41811.

Hamleys Jenners

Toys 'R' Us Grattans

Littlewoods Mail Order Freemans Mail Order Kays Mail Order Empire Stores Mail Order Gloucester Toy Shop
Aliders Department Stores
Toy & Hobby
Argos Superstores
Woolworths & Kidstore
Jolly Glant
Tesco T For Toys
Gamleys

Fenwicks Selfridges Carrefour Fine Fare Makro Asda Telebank

*Recommended retail price



SHAID ON SUPERIOR OF THE STATE OF THE RESIDENCE OF THE RE

COMPETITION

but first . . . A SHORT STORY By JRR Minion

Hobbiton had a strange air about it one particular morning. None of the Hobbits quite knew what was going on - even the wise old Tooks were puzzled.

'Ooo,' said Frodo Baggins as he walked out of his cosy hole this bright and sunny morning, 'what is going on?'

'I dunno Master Frodo, s'ming strange,' said his long-time friend Sam Gamgee, still trying to wipe the sleep out his eyes after a heavy night on old Barleymow's ale. 'It's not them nasty old Black Riders again is it – Ize don't like them, funny people if you ask me.' he continued.

No. I don't think so,' answered Frodo scratching his bottom, 'the air smells of that Melbourne House lot.'

Oh gar, they gimme the creeps, I think Ize going

back to bed - flaming computer people, why can't they leave us to our own devices?' moaned poor old Sam as he tripped over an elven Goblet that was nestling in the grass, still glistening from the misty dew. Sam got up and muttered something under his breath and promptly threw the Goblet into the air.

Meanwhile two halflings were frolicking in a nearby leafy glade when the Goblet came flying into view. BONK! it went as it landed on the head of Stephanic Vizer (the young dwarf at Melbourne House); 'Owww S. !! exclaimed the startled halfling. 'Now, what am I going to do with this?'

I know!' said a fair maiden named Jo, whose voice was as fresh as a lark's song. 'We'll give it away in an amazing competition in CRASH – we can even get the winner's name engraved on it, and we can give posters, games and mugs away too!'

And that's exactly what they did do! THE END

WIN! * An engraved silver-plated goblet! **
Copies of the game! * Mugs and posters too!

HOBBIT .

FRODO

RIDERS

SAM \

MORDOR

So, there we are, or you – depending on which way you look at it. Melbourne House is stumping up the silver plated goblet, with the winner's name engraved on it, and a copy of Shadows of Mordor as first prize; then there's ten second prizes of the game, posters and Mugs, AND ten runners up prizes of the game. To win one of these fabulous Tolkien-esque goodies simply find all the words in the following wordsquare and post the solution off to:

SHADOW COMP, CRASH, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB – and make sure that you get 'em here by the 25 June.

TOLKDFROD JKFELDOG HAFRODOS LDRLMRTA NFIBBHMM WOOWLMAS SXDKOVIS OPZTXED

Name Texty Windlandey Address & New Steine Brighton

Postcode .

TECHNICHE

Ho Hum. 'De spwing is spwung, de gwass is wis it's about time to deal with a few of your letters. If I haven't responded to your letters yet, then it's a running possibility that either:

1. I will, or .

They've got lost.

The latter excuse was validated to some extent by the Great Kean, who informed me that some may have been mislaid during the recent game of musical desks at CRASH Towers.



Jon Bates answers his long neglected readers letters-and gets down to some serious interfacing in the process

Several people have written in with several people have written in with enquiries regarding the RAMFLARE Music Machine (reviewed in Issue 34, November 1986). For those of you who have experienced difficulty in getting hold of the Music Machine, the address

appears fater on.
Most questions revolve around the interfacing of particular music products to hardware. If you've got anything specific like this to ask, then send me an SAE and I'll. ask, then send me an SAE and NI do my best to find out and reply to you. On a more general note, Phil Gyford from Essex wonders it he can connect his 128 and a naw FLARE Music Machine to the checket MKS keyboard. If so, how and what would be the result?

The Music Machine, which slots into the MC noxt, is equipped with

into the I/O port, is equipped with Midt 'In', 'Out', and 'Through.' To interface midt devices you need a midi cable - this is In fact a lead

equipped with five-pin DIN plugs at each end, but unless you are heavily into a soldering iron, melted bits of plastic, and enjoy frustration, I would suggest that frustration, I would suggest mat you buy one made up from a music or electronics store. If you connect 'Out' of the MK5 to 'In' on the Music Machine, you should find that the notes played on the keyboard will sound from the Music Machine audio outputs. Music Machine audio outputs. However, you must check that both the MK5 and the Music Machine are set to the same midichannel, otherwise you won't get a peep out of it. By careful use of the Music Machine you can get it to play its own drums and also give whatever voice you have sampled. The drums themselves are samples, and by not throwing The drums themselves are samples, and by not throwing them away but over writing the built-in sampled synth with your own sample you can glay this voice from the external midl controllers (in this case the MKS), and have the drums play their own pattern which you have cunningly written into the Music Machine. One slight flaw is that you can only play up to two notes simultaneously on the Music smultaneously on the Music
Machine from the MK5, or indeed
any external midi device, so big
chords are definitely out. The MK5 chords are definitely out. The MK5 itself will play as many notes simultaneously as the device it is connected to will allow. A cheaper way would be to use the Mini Interface from CHETAH at £29.95 which would allow you to coatrof the 128's internal sound chip, but with no sampling or drum facility. RAMFLARE have threatened to expand on the Music Machines' software capabilities, especially with the 128 in mind. This should mean that different software coupled with the hardware could coupled with the hardware could give you greater sampling facilities or greater drum facilities.

On the other hand, if you can stretch your budget you can pick up a good second-hand head with the casio CZ101 which will the casio CZ101 which will respond to midi very intelligently indeed. The going rate seems to be about £175 for a model in reasonable nick. You can then have a Music Machine; controlled from the casio (or vice versa) and have endless fun as well as sampling, sequencing and drums. It rather depends whether you see yourself expanding the system. At just under £100, the MKS would be ideallify ou are going to expand the system in the near future. However, I would think that a second-hand midi-equipped synth would be a good one-off purchase. If you couldn't afford the Music Machine immediately you could always try linking the synth and the 128 via the midi outlet on the 128. Details of how this is done are contained in CRASH No 28, May 1986, RAM/ FLARE can be found at. Unit 16, Redfields Industrial Park, Redfield Lane, Church Crookham, Aldershot, Hants, GU13 ORE

SOUND FX FOR CHEAPO **MULTI-TRACKERS**

Ernie Pollard from Liverpool has come up with an idea for inserting sound affects (known to the cognoscentias FX) into your multi-track recording. These FX can of course be those created by Spectrum hardware such as the

снестьи Sound Sampler Utility

package.

His application is for a four-track cassette machine - it will also work on any machine that can bounce sounds from one track to another, but owing to either its low cost or

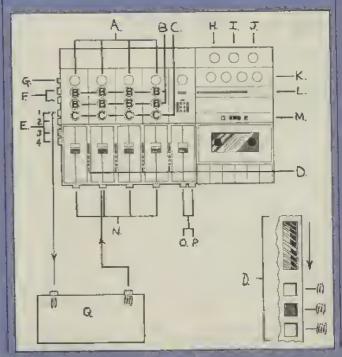
KEY

- Input Gain Controls Parametrics (Treble/Bass) Paripot Selector Switch

- nj mic/ino Tape Cut (Tracks 1 to 4) Sterso Une Out DC18v in

- Lights
 DEX
 Power On
 Tope Cva
 Speed Control
 Tape Counter
 Mic/LingTape in
 Phones

- i) Line In (or Mic In) ii) Line Out (or To Amp)



CHONICHESTECHONICHESTECHONICHO

vast oversights by the design team, has not been provided with auxiliary insent points; as in a fair majority of the cassette multi-track machines.

Emie rightfully points out that it is always best to record sounds where possible without reverb or where possible without reverb or delay, and then add it later when you have a rough idea of the near overall sound – thus evoiding overkill in any department.

Having done this, keep one track free for the FX and then:

Select the channel/instrument

- you want to add the FX to.
- Take a phono lead from the Tape Out of that channel and feed it to the input of your FX, be it Spectrum or otherwise.
- Take another lead from the output of the FX to the line input of the channel you have
- Playback from the original channel but simultaneously record on the spare channel, selecting line in to do so. Here I would recommend a

few thes at this to get the volumes and EQ set correctly It is never a good idea to have one gain control flat out and another only just on. Don't forget that the FX unit may have its own gain controls too.
Keep an eye on the input levels on the channel to be recorded on as you won't want to overlead it would you . . . it could be tree expensive! If all has gone to plan you should now have two treets.

should now have two tracks from the same source - one dry' and one with added FX

If you are using an effect that doesn't allow you to figar the sound source mixed in with the processed sound, then bounding these two tracks together will give you the result in one – this would require careful forethought about the whole recording process though. Hopefully the diagram will help you to visualise the process. Happy multi-tracking, don't blow anything up! See you next month.

BRIGHT IDEA

THE ORIGINAL black Spectrum 128 has an output for an RGB monitor, but unlike the Plus Two it uses a separate BRIGHT line which few monitors can accept

Video guru Chris Howland has written in to explain how the BRIGHT signal can be combined with the Red, Green and Blue lines, so that BRIGHT charactersquares appear correctly even if your monitor hasn't got a BRIGHT input.

You'll need three small signal diodes - the IN4148 is suitable, cheap and common - and three 75ohm resistors.

Connect the resistors and diades in pairs, with the end of the diade marked with a ring (the

GROUND 2 -

SYNC 4

GREEN 6

RED 7-BUILE &

BRIGHT 3-

IN4148

DIODE

WIRES

FROM COMPUTER.

cathode) on the far side from the resistor. Connect all the cathodes to the BRIGHT output from the to the BRIGHT output from the computer (pin 3), and connect the loose ends of the resistors to the Green, Red and Blue outputs (pins 6, 7 and 8). It doesn't matter which way round the resistors are connected, but it's vital to get the diodes the right way round, as shown in the diagram.

Chris has tested this circuit on Ferguson MCD1 and MCD5 monitors, and it should work just as well with other RGB linear displays. It won't work with RGB TTL monitors, which are limited to eight colours.

eight colours.

WIRES TO

750mm WESSTOR.

MONITOR





SIMON GOODWIN returns with news of a program designed to make playing tips a thing of the past: an automatic infinite-lives POKE generator! PLUS help and advice for owners of 128s, Discovery disks, Microdrives and Snapshots...

PLUS TWO ADD-ON CASSETTE

MIKE HYAMS has found a neat way of wining up an external cassette recorder to his Plus Two without drilling a hole in the case and thus invaligating the

without drilling a note in the case and thus invalidating the guarantee.

Mike removed the rubber foot from the base of the computer, under the built-in tape drive, and fitted an earphone socket in its place. He routed signals to the socket from the built-in cassette, as I explained in the December 1985 CRASH.

It's not in an ideal position, but the extra socket is only needed to load old, badly-behaved tapes, so it's not too inconvenient.

And if anything goes wrong, as long as it's not caused by his modification he can just remove the socket, replace the foot and return the computer for repair under warranty. When the guarantee runs out he'll move the socket to a more accessible fitten on the side of the computer box. accessible itio the computer box

TECHIES

DAMIAN SCATTERGOOD has written in asking where he can get hold of the 128 Technical Guide. That was the grand title of a 23page photocopied memo produced for software houses by Andrew Cummins, of Sinclair's defunct Technical Support department.

Amstrad (tel: 0277 228888) now own the rights to the Guide, so they're the only people I can suggest as a source. Much of the information therein, and lots besides, has appeared in the Plus Two manual and past TECH TIPS columns – so you may find the Guide a bit of a disappointment when you get hold of a copy. Richard Welsh is one of several

Richard Weishns one or several readers writing in for more information about the internal workings of the Plus Two. He wants to know if the keypad spoket could be used as an extra interface, perhaps for a joystick.

The keypad circuit is rather strange, and relies on special electronics inside the pad. I'm not sure whether Sinclair did this to reduce the number of wires needed for the link, to allow for future expansion, or just to keep the market for keypads to

128 BUGS REVISITED

I'VE HAD two more letters about the bug in 128 BASIC which I mentioned in April's CRASH. In some circumstances some circumstances comparisons are reordered – for instance, IF Z>B-1 would become IF ZB>-1! As far as I know this bug is in all Spectrum 128 ROMs. In my last column I suggested you could get past the problem by putting brackets round the right-hand part of the comparison; but that's not the only answer it seems.

the only answer, it seems. Paul Carrig found the fault independently, and came up with an ingenious but rather longwinded solution. First he typed SPECTRUM to get his program into 48K BASIC, where the bug does not exist. Then he entered the tricky line, saved the result, and reloaded the file into 128

BASIC

Pan Tomey has a simpler solution – he says all is well if you type a space after the comparison

A similar trick is needed to enter cursor-control lines like this:

LET X=X+(DX AND INKEY\$="8") - (DX AND INKEY\$="5")

If you type that into a 128 as written, the computer will mistakenly indicate an error after the first closing bracket. But if you put a space before that bracket, it

These bugs in the 128's Editor ROM aren't serlous, but they can be imitating till you know how to get round them.

HETECH NICHE TEC DISK DILEMMAS

HEAVY READING

IF YOU'VE GOT a keypad and you're feeling keen, you can read its 18 keys using a machine-code routine in the 128 Editor ROM, You

routine in the 128 Editor ROM. You can't call the code from BASIC, unfortunately, as you must page out the ZX BASIC ROM to gain access to the Editor. The following explanation is a bit escience, but I hope it I satisfy the technes! The first step is to disable interrupts. Then swap ROMs by clearing bit 4 on port 32765; you can get the value of the other bits from BANKM, at address 23388. Bit 3 selects between the two screen RAM banks, and bit 5 controls the hardware lock that makes it impossible to get into the makes it impossible to get into the 128's memory when you're using the computer in 48K mode, Bits 0, 1 and 2 select which of the eight RAM pages appears in the top

16K. as I explained last year.

A call to ad a 28h will return with the zero flag reset if something is wrong – eg if there's no keypad or too many keys are depressed. Other wise the value in the E register fells you what's going on. 126 indicates no key, values from 91 to 107 correspond to unshitted keys, and 108 to 125 Indicate that the O/SHIFT key is depressed (ahhif), with or without another key.

Remember to restore the ZX BASIC ROM, and to then turn interrupts back on, when you've finished reading the pad.

Other useful routines in the 128 ROM are at 286, to write a character to the MIDI port, and at 295, to send one to the RS-232. Both require that interrupts are disabled, and send the character in the A register.

You can read the RS-232 by calling 289, again in the Editor ROM. If a character is received the carry flag will be set on return and the character-code will be in A.

Dominic's recent review of the RAM PRINT interface, and wants to know if it'll work with disk systems. RAM Electronics say it's compatible with Microdrives and the Opus Discovery disk drive; and they say they'll make every effort to get it to work with the Spectrum Plus Three when it turns up

As I write, in early May, a few Plus Threes have apparently made their way to software houses. accompanied by secrecy agreements - Alan Sugar might have learned a lesson from the Iron Lady herself.

Still, a public launch appears imminent; W.H. Smith seem to be clearing out their stocks of Plus

Twos in preparation.

Personally, I find the idea of a
Spectrum with a standard, built-in three-inch disk appealing, but ratherrisky for the trade. I can't see TOWARD DOWNERS DRIVE VIEW IN on the machine if Amstrad include a snapshot button to save games on disk - they've already been damaged by piracy on Amstrad's earlier home machines. Disks make life very, very easy for

pirates. That said, the Plus Three certainly won't take off unless we can use the drive to save games.

Time will tell. I hope to have more to say about the Plus Three —and the prospects for a Plus Four next month.

— next month. A few hearts must have missed a beat when Opus, maker of the Discovery disk system, stopped trading. But it looks as if the machine will still be supported; a marketing company has picked up the stocks of interfaces, and tive just received a copy of the first newsletter of the Spectrum Discovery Club, an Independent user group which publishes

material on disk and paper.
The spelling is a bit erratic, but the information is interesting. There's lots about programtransfer techniques, and instructions on how to connect extra drives and bump the 718K. For details and a free copy of the newsletter, send an SAE to Peter Lilley at 8 Raymnam Crescent, Keighley, West Yorkshire BD21 2TP.

VOLEX UPDATE

IT'S BAD NEWS, I'm afraid, The ex TTS2000S teletext adapter is only compatible with the bog-standard 48K Spectrum. It won't work with the Discovery disk or the Spectrum 128, though it can drive Printer, Thanks to N H Oughton for this information

MICRODRIVE REVIVA

MICRODRIVE owners may be interested in a suggestion from F Bieling – a simple but delicate operation which apparently yields an extra 2-3K on most tapes, and

often restores the performance of ones that seemed worn out.

F Bieling says old or tired cartridges can often be brought back to life by retensioning the little conner serious that holds the little copper spring that holds the tape against the microdrive head The spring is compressed when you insert and remove cartridges, and problems crop up when it won't hold the tape firmly in place.

Use a pencil or a small unmagnetised screwdriver to pull atwo-centimetre loop of tape from the cartridge, Reach past the loop, very carefully, and loosen the spring by unhooking one end from the plastic moulding. Don't just put a screwdriver in the middle and jerk it, or you'll probably break the

Before you release the other end of the spring you should move the loose end outside the cartridge, as shown in the diagram. This makes It easier to remove the whole spring, by moving it gently toward the end that's still clipped in.

Bend the spring legs toward

each other, as shown, to restore

each other, as shown, to reduce the spring's power.

And, as they always say in repair manuals, reassembly is the reverse of the above procedure!

Once the spring is back in place you must push the loop of tape

back into the cartridge, without

touching it with your fingers, and format the cartridge once to let it run in, I wouldn't advise you to try anything so drastic on a lape containing valuable information, but this technique may be worth a go if one of your cartridges takes early retirement.

SCORNER

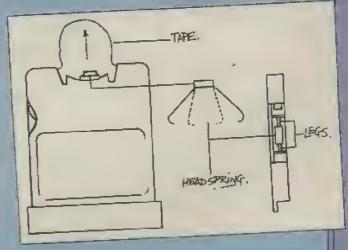
themselves. The last explanation

themselves. The last explanation seems the most likely, as the 128 Technical Guide deliberately avoids describing the circuit. The Guide says this about the keypad: 'It connects to the Spectrum 128 over a special bidirectional link, using a protocol which due to its complexity (and likely changing nature) we will not document.' It seems that the pad behaves as 5x4 matrix internally, but it's not easy to read it.

behaves as a 5x4 matrix internally, but it's not easy to read it.

I'd be fascinated to hear from any reader who's worked out what's going on, or found an application for the socket, but I'm not very hopeful. The keypad itself is notenger available, though most of its functions can be obtained using combinations of average. using combinations of normal keys, as I've explained in past

You could wire the socket as an Instant interface for joysticks, using the connection points Histed in the December 1985 CRASH, but you'd have to disconnect all the existing wires and replace them with connections to the keyboard matrix, you diget little more than a conveniently-placed nonstandard



WILL THE REAL SIMON GOODWIN PLEASE STAND UP?

IN LAST MONTH'S SIGNPOST IN LAST MONTH'S SIGNIFOST S.J. Harding was whingeing about a letter frem Simon Goodwin of Beyond — a name that he said 'sounds familiar', Well, it's not me! It seems there are at least three Simon Goodwins scribbling away these days. Most of the stuffunder that name (S.by me, because I've

been programming, broadcasting and writing fainty single-mindedly since 1979.

since 1979.
But the one who worked for Beyond, and C&VG before that, is Simon P Goodwin.
And every so often I get blamed for Amstrad programs that appear in Popular Computing Weekly, but

it's not my fault, honestly – it's yet another Simon Goodwin.

As far as I know, i'm the only one who writes about Sinciair computers. So if you're called Simon Goodwin too, I'd advise you to change your name now, or pick a different hobby!

ETECH NICHESTECH NICHESTECH

THE GAMESTER -LLOYD MANGRAM IN SOFTWARE?

THIS MONTH I'm reviewing one of the strangest programs we've ever received, a utility intended to automatically give the player infinite lives on most types of games'! It comes with a list of 23 games—all recent hits—which the author has tested and found compatible; I've tried it on several other titles, with mixed but intriguing results. The Gamester is, as the author eays, 'totally original and quite unique'.

The Gamester is set up much like Genie, the £9.95 pop-up disessambler I reviewed in January. It's a small machine-code program that loads into the add-on RAM of Romentic Robot's backup interface, Multiface 1. This means that you can use it without snorpaching upon the 48K used for normal programs, and can call it at any time, whatever else the computer is doing, by pressing the red button on the Multiface.

The Gamester takes less than a minute to load from cassette; the computer then appears to reset itself, as if you'd just turned it on programs as normal. When you press the magic button a menu THIS MONTH I'm reviewing one

itself, as if you'd just turned it on, programs as normal. When you press the magic button a menu appears at the top of the screen. The menu indicates the amount of disk, tape or wafer space that's needed to save the program now in memory, and invites you to press one of five keys.

Pressing R resets the computer, leaving The Gamester computer, leaving The Gamester set up, so you can load a different game. Keys 1 to 4 tell The Gamester to search quickly through the loaded program, finding and modifying groups of instructions that look as if they leap track of the player's lives. The four options correspond to different groups of instructions; the author tells you which to choose for each of the 23 games on his list, but for other titles you must resert to trial and error.

Once you've selected an appropriate option the normal Multifiace menu appears, and you can restart, save programs or acreens or make manual alterations to the code as if The Gamester weren't loaded. You mustn't use the WINDOW memory-display option, however, or The Gamester's code will be overwritten.

Itned The Gamester on a coupte

overwritten.
Itned The Gamesteron a couple of games from the supplied flat.
Uridium was patched for infinite lives with no trouble, but The Gamester seemed to corrupt other parts of the code of Jack The Nipper, the lower part of the screen filled with sprite

components after Host my first life, though play continued with infinite lives in the top area.

Having loaded "Wizard"s Lair, a program not on the list, I found that The Gamester could after the game but could not give me infinite lives. One option caused all the apriles to move back and forth along fixed diagonals; another stopped the animation.

At this point I realised one major fault of The Gamester from the point of view of homble cassetteusers such as myself—you spend

point of view of hemble cassette-users such as myself – you spend a lot of time loading and rebading programs. If you don't find the right option at first, you must reload the program to be patched. You may have lotiny all four options—and you've no guarantee that any of them will work.

I switched to 16K programs at this point, to save time and try The Gamester on a range of old titles. JetPac and Pssst were patched perfectly, using Option One, but I couldn't get quite what I wanted on other games.

Option One gave a centinuous

my first accurate shot was also my last. Option I wo gave infinite fives, but also made the other bikes run away faster than any player could chase them — it was impossible to

chase them — it was impossible to get within trange!

I was interested to see what The Gamester would do to Earth Defence — a missile-command variant which doesn't really use the normal doesn't really use the normal doesn't really use the normal doesn't so play didn't continue after the first screen.

Using it on Meteor Attack I ended up with only one life, rather than the original three.

An interesting

At a guess, The Gamester works by searching for indirect decrement instructions followed by tests for zero. This is a good rule to start out with when hacking programs by hand, but it's too crude to give reliable results.
Frenkly, I'm amazed it works as well as it does, and author D R Walton deserves credit for persevering in an area where most programmers would give up after a few minutes!

As it stands, The Gamester is

a few minutes!
As it stands, The Gemester is more of a toy than a unlity, though it may be worth having if you've got several games on the author's list, it costs £5 from **D R Waiton**, 115 Wash Lane, South Yardley, Birmingham 825 8PX.

CANDID SNAPSHOTS

QUITE A FEW of you have written in about the Datel Snapshot, which Itested (with very little success) in the Christmas CRASH, Opinions the Christmas CRASH. Opinions are mixed: some people find it works okay, others criticlse the sioppy design (and Date!'s claim that it will copy all games), and some users lind it almost completely useless.
It's probably a design fault that makes Snepshot incompatible with certain Spectrums, even though those computers work fine with other press-button copiers.

with other press-button copiers. Datel haven't responded to our offer to test a replacement unit, so I assume the flaws haven't been corrected.

The good news is that Ambrose Clarke has written in with a totally new application for the Snapshot which does seem to work on all

which does seem to work on all machines – and offers lots of scope for hackers.

He's written a tiny machine-code program which copies the first 8K of Spectrum ROM into Snapshot RAM, so you can customise BASIC. (For this Ambrose wins £20 worth of software of his choice.)

All you need to do is plug to a

software of his choice.)
All you need to do is plug in a Snapshot 2 and RUN his program. You can bring back the old ROM at any time with OUT 127,66. To bring in the RAM, type OUT 127,67. Ambrose suggests a few changes, such as POKE 8020,55: POKE 8021,201 to disable BREAK in a program, and POKE 1524,0 to stop BREAK while loading.

I was more interested in playing around with the timing values used in the cassette routines, it only takes one POKE to speed up loading, though four are needed to

The value at address 1427 is normally 203. Subtract 8 from this for Decathalon-speed loading about 20 per cent faster than normal, without the unreliable modified header that Ocean used. Subtract 14 (giving 189) to load files in two thirds of the normal time. An adjustment factor of 21 gives megafast double-speed loading, but you may find this

unreliable.
These 'fastloads' will only work if the corresponding file was saved at high speed. You need four POKEs to adjust the speed of SAVEing – adjust the values at 1272, 1305, 1311 and 1326. Subtract 12 from all four logations for 20 per cort constant. for 20 per cent extra speed; - 21 gives two-thirds loading time; -32 gives double speed.

CLEAR 29999 RESTORE: T=0 FOR N=30000 TO 30026: READ A POKE N.A: LET T=T-A: NEXT N IF T<>1916 "Check DATA," STOP LET L=USH (30000) DATA 33,0,0,17,0,128, 1,0,32,237,176,62,62,2 DATA 127,33,0,128,17, 0.0,1,0,32,237,175,201 Ambrose Clarke's routine to allow SNAPSHOT owners to make temporary changes to ZX BASIC

MICRODRIVE STOP PRESS

I'VE JUST HEARD that the design

collaborated with ICL to design a new, tougher spring for the tapes. ICL uses Sinclair cartridges in Ineli

COMING SOON -

AMONG OTHER GOODIES, next AMONG OTHER GOODIES, next, month's column should include routines to convert samples and drum files between Checken addons and the RAM Music Machine. I've had several letters asking for these, they'were originally planned to appear in the April CRASH.

TECH TIPS is a two-way column. If you've get an idea or a question, please write it; but check whether or not I've, answered your question in a past column, and please don't ask me to write programs just for you.

Please don't send SAEs ~ there Please don't send SAEs - there are so many letters every month that I can't promise to reply personally. I respond to as many letters as possible in each month's column, and there's a prize of \$20 worth of software of your choice each month for the reader who sends in the best tip. The address to write to is: Simon Goodwin, TECH TIPS, CRASH, PO 80x 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB ONLY £5.95
FOR YOUR SPECTRUM



Simble Simple States of the Chickens of the Ch

Starring ZAPPO the near of Arizona. Soft

Dry, dusty deserted field, in the heart of Arizona. Soft rest the landing claws of the Martian silver ship.

Many were the cackles of delight from tall and vicious chickens. Off strolled through cheery cactus grove went Zappo our young hero, showed peacefully contentment. If broken shell of Elephant Bird across his path become. His eyes and ears alerted up. His riose a tuitchy raised to the wind. He sow them leave their silver, ship, he saw their

the wind. He saw them leave their silver ship; he saw their mutant hatching. He heard their evil plans for dags and beasts. He said, "I shall not fear these fiends from Planet Mars, they are but chickens". He wished he hadn't for every single chicken turned to where he stood, and hoisted up their fearsome weapons. With nothing left to do, he jammed the braken egg shell on his head. The confusion reigned for half a tick and white he ran away, a thousand flaming balts of fire burst all around his tail.

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THE RENEGADE LORD

This superb arcade game is based on the popular multiple-choice adventure series

This superb arcade game is based on the popular multiple-choice adventure series by Mark Smith and Jamie Thomson, published by Sphere Books. Set in 3033 AD you are a special agent, codename FALCON, and your mission is to halt the tracks of a renegade Time Lord who is threatening to disrupt future history by his ruthless meddling in the past. Your time machine "Falcon's Wing" takes you in your quest to ensure the timelines of the future remain uncorrupted!

Please send me FALCON: The Renegade Lord

Commodore 64/128 Spectrum 48/128

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(Please do not post coins or notes.)

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Virgin Games, 2/4 Vernon Yard, Portobello Road, London W11 2DX



SABOTEUR II

Producer: Durell Retail Price: £7.95 Author: Clive Townsend

entral security of the Dictator's mountain hideout was breached and details of his missile systems stolen in Saboteur 1. With the Ninja warrior who undertook that mission now dead, his sister continues the work, using the newly acquired information to alter the missile's target.

To do that our Ninjette must first enter the headquarters, which are protected by androids and purns,

BEN

"Considering the time that Durell have had to develop Saboteur II it isn't a step on from its predecessor, more of a lateral move really. Having said this, it isn't a bad game, and it's sure to keep Saboteur fans happy for ages. There are a lot of screens and the guards are tough, so overall it's a very hard game to play - but it is rewarding when you find the first piece of tape, or the bike. The jerky graphics can be annoying at times, but they're generally bearable, with a title tune and some worthy effects during the game; the 128K version has the same affects but is graced with a great tune."

PAUL

"No surprises here, folks, the basic concept is very similar to the tirst game. Graphically, it's exactly the same, but contains many more features; flame throwers, hang gliders etc. The animetion is superb – especially that of the pumes, and I like the idea of the player controlling a women leaping about – it makes little difference really, but I'm sure lady players will find it appealing. Overall, Saboteur II is a much more challenging game than the first, with more obstacles and many more rooms. A superb follow-up with great depth of content."

by choosing her moment to drop from a hang-glider. There she finds an armoury, missile sito, offices, lifts and underdeveloped open areas. Inside the complex she can run left and right, jump up, drop down, or use ladders to reach other levels, while avoiding vampire bats in the lower levels.

Although android guards carry throwing knives and flame throwers, with each programmed in unarmed combat, they can be evaded and their weapons avoided by leaping or reaching areas where they do not follow. Androids and purnas can be killed, by punching, high kicking and flinging objects, (a martial arts throwing weapon is initially carried), but their great strength gen-



 On yer bike Joan! It's the Avenging Angel herself, about to be accested by masty androids.

erally requires several lethal blows to be delivered very accurately. For every blow landed and opponent killed, money is earned.

No energy is consumed by running or alimbing, but puma bites, burns, drowning, falls and contact with guard's weapons reduces our beroine's reserves. This can be replenished by standing quietly in screens where all guards have been killed, or do not follow, but

GARETH

"Saboteur II is as appealing as its predecessor. I had many hours of fun playing the original -- this follow up has all its qualities and lots more. Screen layouts are pretty much the same, and so's the sound; which may imply that it's a copy rather than a continuation. Not at all! Playability has increased greatly, with keyboard response being Improved. You might get a little bored with the same aspects of play, but although Saboteur II is slightly expensive, it's well worth having as a follow up."

not by waiting on ladders.

As progress is made through the 700 or so flick screens, supply crates containing objects, such as pieces of pipe, spanners, knives and some items not immediately identifiable are discovered. Crates can be searched — a stash searched message appears when this is complete — with their contents successively displayed in the 'near' box at the screen's base. When there, they can be transfered to the 'held' box and subsequently hurled at attackers. Only one object can be held at a time.

Computer tape may be contained within supply boxes, and when sufficient has been collected, it can be used to redirect the missile. At higher skill levels the terminal next to the missile can only be operated when extra sections of computer tape have been collected. When acquired computer tape pieces are displayed at the bottom of the screen. Other computer terminals control lifts and the electrified perimeter fence.

Once the missile's flight has been altered, survival depends on escaping by motorbike, along the single exit from the mountain – the tunnel protected by electrified fences – before missile launch. A clock shows time remaining until

Once a mission's been successfully completed, the next game level, with its separate mission objectives, can be started.

COMMENTS

Control keys: A/Z up/down, N/M left/right, Space to fire Joystick: Kempston, Interface

Use of colour: strong and clean

Graphics: large, nicely defined characters, tendency to flicker Sound: good tune and spot FX Skill levels: one; codes for other 13

Screens: over 700
General rating: Involving and challenging beat 'em up which successfully incorporates its adventure elements.

Committee .	_
Presentation	84%
Graphics	83%
Playability	50.70
Addictive qualities	79%
Value for money	78%
Overall	83%
	-1-m 1/8





THE ASTONISHING ADVENTURES OF MR WEEMS

AND THE SHE VAMPIRES

Producer: Piranha Retail Price: £7.95 Author: Ram Jam

ampire hunting isn't everyone's idea of a hobby, but Mr Weems thinks that it's a pretty good way of passing the time. With this in mind he sets out to kill the Great She Vampire.

Having entered her Mansion, Mr Weems discovers that its a sixlevel, flick screen complex of corridors and rooms with locked doors. Collected keys unlock them, but there are hidden doors as well, and magic transporter blocks.

On each level Weems encounters bat-infested coffins and pots, iumbering, but stupid Frankenstein monsters, and menacing she vampires with street smarts. If they bump him in the night, they give Weems anaemia. Should his blood count ever fall to zero he suc-

PAUL

"I found Mr Weems to be a most enjoyable game. Its only flaw being the graphics. Ove to the high amount of detail used, they very easily appear messy on the screen — often quite indistinguishable. Colour is well used however, despite being mainly monochromatic, and the flick screen idea is a sensible choice, as a scrolling play area would have ruined it. Nonetheless, Mr Weems is fun to play, even though it's another on the well-worn Gauntlet path. Asking the full wack for a re-hash of an older game puts its value for money down quite a bit."

BEN

"I was a little surprised to see this in the In Tray, as there has been none of the usual Piranha hype surrounding. Despite strong Gauntiet overtones (which I've seen all too often recently). Mr Weems proves to be a playable game, marred only by its difficulty and less than slick presentation. Along with most Gauntistesque games the graphics can get messy, and confusing when there's a lot happening on screen. This does effect gameplay somewhat If you're playing on a colour TV (but then again, turning the colour down at times of panic shouldn't be too much of a strain)..."

cumbs to death, but Weems can turn vampire himself and replenish his blood levels by picking up the blood bottles he finds on his adventure. He can also pop a smart-gartic pill to give himself a short-term immunity to others' bloodsucking attentions.

Not content with merely smelling tike a French chef, Weerns also totes a garlic-firing gun with almost limitiess cloves; there are garlic bombs to be picked up en route to. When used, these remove offending creeps from the show, but are ineffective when the ultimate level is reached. Points are awarded for each creature creamed, and when when all bloodsuckers have been removed from each room, coffins can be destroyed, a point being given for every one blasted.

On reaching the uitimate level, our be-garlicked vampire enthusiast finds the Great She Vampire's penthouse lair. There he can kill her at his telsure, but only if he has acquired the secret weapons – a stake, a mallet, a mega-garlic plece, a mirror and



MIKE

"Here's a pleasant enough Gauntlet derivative. The graphics are fine; though the bespectacled Weems looks out of place in a game that seems to demand warriors and wizards. He hum. As far as playability goes, there's a good bit there, but I'm straid lastability is limited – I got a bit bored after only the second level. This, in a game costing as much as Mr Weems, is too little playing time. Overpriced, but a fun play. "

crucifix - contained within boxes on each of the levels. Once col-

or each of the levels. Once collected these are shown on screen. If he manages to despatch the Great She Vampire, Weems must make like Seb Coe and leave the vampire-ridden Mansion before her enraged minions can seek him out — but if that's what you like doing for a hebby, Bon Apetit.





Joystick: Kempston, Interface

Use of colour: very bright sur-rounds to a largely monoc-

hromatic playing area Graphics: often extremely busy and sometimes confus-

Sound: above average

by over-busy graphics.

Playability Addictive qualities Value for money

Presentation Graphics

Skill lavels: one Screens: six levels of flick

General rating: Effective enter and destroy game of reasona-ble addictivity, slightly spoiled

JACKLE AND WIDE

Producer: Bulldog Retail Price: £1.99

fter years of research, Dr Jackle perfects the everasting youth potion which he has long sought. However, on downing the mysterious brew he's transformed into his evil alter ego, Mr Wide. Foolishly Jackle pro-duced no antidote before this metamorphosis. So, the secret laboratory of Dr Piqued (a rival solentist who may have formulated a remedy) must be found and entered if Jackle is ever to feel himself again.

In this arcade adventure. Wide cycles through Hyde Park before entering the sewer maze which hides Piqued's lab. A bird's-eye view is given of the park with the screen scrolling vertically to reveal pathways in the four usual directions

In the park, our hero discovers useful objects, such as a doubleheaded axe, a sea-sickness pill, some vanishing herbs and sparkl-ing gems - four of which can be carried at any one time. They assist Wide in solving riddles which take him further towards Piqued's hideaway. An on-screen message gives hints (can you swim?, go left) and identifies any acquired Item, with an inventory of carried objects available when

Onc below, Wide abandons his bike and tip-toes through a labyrinth of sewer rooms. Some rooms quickly diminish Wide's energy, whilst others are full of gas which increases the time which increases the time countdown against which the game is played, yet more fill with rising water. Hasty exits can be made through doorways.

Creatures fatal to the touch lurk in some sewers, while others merely reduce Wide's energy level which must never reach zero. The rate of energy loss is diminished if Wide carries appropriate objects (for instance, the sea-sickness pill counteracts rising water). Energy reserves are topped up by firing at the 'Intelligent spike'.

The park can be revisited from certain sections of the sewer. However, once left, the scientific scoundrel cannot return through the same entrance. On re-entry, Wide receives a full complement of energy.

Seen from above on his Penny-Farthing, Wide prowis the pathways of Hyde Park looking for an underground entrance.



Underground at last? The corpulently evil Wide seeks his kinder after ego in the



CRITICISM

" I was beginning to think that Buildog would be one of the most notable budget software houses around, Feud was an excellent start and Colony had quite a few good points. How-ever, Jackle and Wide Is disappointing in comparison. The basic plot of 'find an object so you can complete a sub-game' has been used to its limit by now and should really be forgotten. The underground sequence looks good but plays badly and the Hyde Park section is very primitive indeed. Uninteresting and at times tedious so lasting appeal is very limited."

" I spent most of the time with Jackle and Wide wandering about, trying to work out exactly what I was supposed to be doing. However, during this ramble! did notice that the screens were nearly all the same - in fact all aspects of the graphics are appalling. Also, a little sound would have gone a long way towards making play more enjoy-able. I will give some credit though, the game is original, but perhaps you can't expect a great deal for a budget price.

"The instructions are vague and unhelpful. However, I found the gameplay to be very simple, and spent my time wishing that there was more to it. Graphically, the program ranges from colourful and distinct characters to plain and unimaninality a hackgrounds." and unimaginative backgrounds. Despite the strong story line, Jackle and Wide involves little more than trudging around and getting very bored.

COMMENTS

Control keys: Q/A up/down, O/P left/right, Symbol Shift to fire Joystick: Kempston, Interface 2 Use of colour: rather varied; often excellent, sometimes dull Graphics: busy scrolling backgrounds and reasonable sized sprites Sound: poor Skill levels: one Screens: scrolling park area, nine sewers and the final chamber General rating: A good, and often original idea falls into a sadly

Presentation	51%
Graphics	50%
Playability	38%
Addictive qualities	38%
Value for money	47%
Overall	41%

clichéd game lacking content.

BACKNUMBERS

Another dose of traditionally festive this year accompanied by iss LNV and containing a peek behind the scenes in Grovel Hill, where they make the magazine the bears Lloyd's mitials. Lloyd himsel



looks back over 1986 giving a resume of the games we all played. Mel Croucher begins the sage of TAMABA KNIGHT. Part One of the tale of a fast-lood salesbeing of the future is accompanied by Part Two. Simon Goodwin finds that it isn't just Spectrum owners who are playing Spectrum games. ... Apart from the usual regular features, we talked to the permanassiewers and found out about the split, reviewed Kat Trap, the GENESIS game and looked at musical add-ons. Not looked at musical add-ons. Not forgetting the definitive CRASH Index for 1986 and the NEWSFIELD

No 37: February 1987 The man behind JETMAN is inter-viewed and reveals a few of his dark viewed and reveals a few of his dark secrets, and we reveal the dark secrets of the tip of reviewers chained up in the CRASH Dungeon. TAMARA KNIGHT continues her adventures, as does Franco Frey in the world of Video Digitisers. The full match report on the Metch Dey Challenga is given, in which we tell how one of the programmers responsible for the classic game ended up 'sick as a parrot'. Cames mapped in February Included part of Fairight II, all of Fireford, Avanger and Dendy. and Dandy

You might be lucky and win an entire set of CRASH from Issue One onwards in this month's competition on page 142. On the other hand, you might not, and you wouldn't want to miss out on anything, would you?

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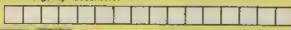
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Despite warnings in last month's CRASH, Guru Denise tells us that some flendishly intractable persons still haven't compulsory). Last month she was merely upset, this month the Subscription Queen is white with fury (and Hell hath no

But we prevalled in calming her down by getting her to play some games with Spectravideo's 'Joyball' controller. So here's the deal: You take out a year's subscription to GRASH (12 issues post included) for a mere paltry £15 (£22 if you live outside the UK), and forgiving Denise will send you, ABSO-LUTELY FREE, a Spectravideo Joyball' controller worth almost £20. Can't say fairer than that - except that existing subscribers get a chance of a cheapo deal on the controller as well . . . read on . . .

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IMAGIN



E E R I N G



ODOREI8:95 AMSTRAD £8:95 KONAMI'S COIN-OP HITS £9:95 - ALL FORMATS

MAX — Came Design Nitchloutsu. ARMY MOVES :: 1987 Game Design Dinamic,



Producer: Alligata Retail Price: £8.95 Author: Operasoft

ack to Victorian days when the Queen never smiled and Stanley had lost and Livingstone.

In an attempt to discover him Stanley sets out into 63 flick screens of the African jungle after the good doctor. Moving left, right, ducking and jumping from platform to platform, Stanley's task is to solve problems, for instance, switches open barriers, but cannot abulinusly, he reached. Hidden obviously be reached. Hidden exits once discovered allow him to move on to the next level.

Diminishing energy can be plenished in time-honoured replenished

RICKY

" The ideas within Livingstone are an enjoyable combination of old and new it takes the platform game a bit further with the addition of four different weapons. Most screens present a 'Now, how do I get out of that?' problem, but they that? problem, but they aren't frustrating, and can be most rewarding when comproblem, pleted. The graphics appear to suit the action well and generally it adds up to an pleasant little game that should keep a good chunk of spectrum owners amused for some time.

tradition by picking up the food and drink he finds on his travels, Zero energy causes the unsung explorer to lose one of his his lives.

On his quest our hero must battle past, or avoid a crop of maneating plants, slithering snakes, dart-puffing pygmies, watching eyes, coconut-chucking monkies, quicksands, bullets, canibals, alligators, scorpions and tumbles into deep mine workings. Should he fall foul of any of these a life is lost. As an added problem Stanley finds that a flapping sea eagle is out to get him.

For protection and help the intrepid Victorian carries a boomerang, daggers, and grenades, which must be used with care if he is not to self-destruct. Additionally he owns a vaulting pole to help him reach higher platforms. The strength with which weapons can be hurled or vaults made is regulated using Space, One of the 63 flick screens of Livingstone, with heroic Staatey in search of the good Doctor,

PAUL

"What a pleasant surprise Livingstone is. The graphics totally suit the scenario, and there are many different col-ours and some VERY attrac-tive bits of animation. The screen is set out superbly you would expect loads of colour clashes, but in fact they're disguised very well. The equipment that you carry and the foreigners that you meet create the perfect atmosphere - I especially fiked the piranhas that jump out of the river. This game has so much content and it's sheer fun. "



"I haven't seen a game in this genre for ages—it certainly makes a change from all the usual stuff and no mistake. The plot's fairly simple once the phraso book English on the inley has been deciphered (Livingstone is a Spanish game), as is the gameplay once you've worked out the behaviour of your weapons. The presentation, graphics and sound are all well above average so this isn't a bad buy at all, although I'm not too sure it will keep most people playing for very long."

HOWARD THE DUCK

Producer: Activision Retail Price: £9.99 Author: Software Studios

oward is an extra-terrestrial duck who has been mysteriously spirited to Earth. He looks a bit odd, but is an amicable fellow with two friends, Beverly and Phil. Beverly and Phil are good sorts too, but they have just been kidnapped by the Dark Overlord, who has taken them to his abode on Volcano Island. Howard is a mite peeved at this, and so he sets out on a rescue mission. What he doesn't know is that the Overland is expecting this sort of reaction, and has set traps to capture the feathered hero.

To begin with, the player's name is typed in and the level of play selected from the four provided: novice, intermediate, advanced, and expert. The levels differ in the number of lives granted, the enemy's aggression level and the length of the game.

The screen displays a view of the island, with Howard automati-cally parachuting onto a pathway. The joystick is used to move Howard around, and he can go any-where as long as the landscape

BEN

"A film tie-in which actually relates to its subject matter is an unusual event, so on this level Howard the Duck is quite a pleasant surprise. The program sticks as closely as possible to the film (considering the limitations of the computer game format), so the only real pity is that the film was so raff! The presentation is up to Activision's usual standard, and the graphics and sound are competent and functional – the only problem gameplay-wise is that the control method is quite tricky. Howard the computer game is an average, but ultimately uninteresting product – and quite expensive to boot."

allows, scrolling the scenery as he goes. The fire button makes him jump, kick and punch, the action depending on his situation.

The first part of the mission tollows Howard's heroic journey across the island. First he has to find the back-pack which he dropped during the parachute drop, This contains a Solar-Powered Jet-Pack, a Microlite Flying Machine and a portable Neutron Disintegrator.

Having found the pack, our feathered friend makes his way around the island to a volcano, home of the Overlord. Hazards are encountered throughout this jour-ney: mutant slime has to be jumped and mini-mutants intent on Howard's capture pop up from molehills. These are dispatched with swift, well-aimed kicks, and jumping on the molehills prevents

their re-emergence, Should Howard reach the foot of the volcano he is automatically

PAUL

" At first sight Howard The Duck is a very ettractive Spy Vs Spy lookalike. The graphics are very well designed, combining some good detail with lots of colour. The instructions are commendably friendly, giv-ing all of the necessary facts. I particularly liked the diffi-culty ratings – they improved the addictiveness ten times over, and should appeal to all times of allows. types of player. Howard The Duck is a pleasing game, although the price is a bit over the top."

10 CRASH June 1987 and an illuminated icon at the base of the screen informs of the object currently held.

Points are awarded for despatched attackers, but jungle life can be tedious, so watch out for five gems which may lie in strange places such as birds' nests; only when all of these have been collected is there any chance of passing the secret temple.

COMMENTS

Control keys: Q/A up/down, O/P left/right, Space to fire Joystick: Kempston Use of colour no clashes, lots used to make colourful and varied screens

Graphics: neatly described characters, good anrmation Sound: no tune on 48K and fewFX, title tune and betterFX on 128

Skill levels: one Screens: 63

General rating: A modest sounding game that surprises for its polished design and interesting play.

Presentation 1 of Ciriphiles Staya Addictive qualities Value money 77%

strapped in to his microlite. He must then fly over the mouth of the volcano and parachute in.

The penultimate section involves a dangerous run through a crumbling cave, where falling stalagittes and holes in the floor impede the duck's progress. When this has been negotiated, Howard meets the Overlord in a final, deadly confrontation. The evil kidnapper dies when shot three times with the neutron disintegrator.

COMMENTS

Centrol keys: 7/6 up/down,5/ 6 left/right, zero to fire Joystick: Kempston, Interface

Use of colour: varied, and generally clash free Graphics: small spintes on a lively background Small spintes on a lively background Small spinted to rare spot FX Skill levels: four General rating: A slightly above average game which has sprung from a dreadful

Presentation	77%
Graphics	72%
Playability	59%
Addictive qualities	49%
Value for money	53%
Overall	61%

RED SCORPION

Producer: Quicksilva Retail Price: £8.95

he Bombyx Moons are almost entirely composed of pure Talanite, which the evil Necrons are ripping off from the Bombyxians. Terran civilisation can offer them fer more. To that end you, as a Star Commando, are sent to the Bombyx Moons to dispose of Necronian personnel and their military and communication installations.

Ferried by the mother ships 'Zhukov' and 'Coral Sea' you're dropped to a moon's surface in a Red Scorpion space fighter. A head up display views the combat zone on a horizontally scrolling

Red Scorpion moves left, right, forward and back, with direction indicated on a navigational geocompass. The craft carries four vision systems: microwave, which detects underground installations and looks through camouflage; Infra red, which detects fast moving objects; ultra violet which identifies Talanite sources; and natural light.

It carries four threat detectors, activated when enemy targets come within range. These detect above ground structures, Tatanite mines, armed aliens, and Necron missites. Additional help is given by the 'Coral Sea' which relays information about Necron missite launches.

Enemy fire damages Red Scorpion's shields, with a twofigure number at the top left of the screen indicating their condition. When that rating falls to zero the next hit destroys the craft. The ship's armoury is made up of armour-piercing missiles, cluster bombs, sonic stunners, a multi-frequency electronic warfare system, and a particle cannon. Points are awarded for each enemy target destroyed, and a total is shown at the top of the screen. Ten onscreen icons show the status of weapon and vision systems.

Both mother ships are used during the operation, a rendezvous can be made with the Coral Sea and Zhukov provides heavy cover fire, this however causes damage to the Red Scorpion's shields,

Complete the mission successfully and promotion is yours.

COMMENTS

"What's this, Battlezone with a plot and a strategy element? Nobody could possibly cope with the nasty icons, the hostile craft that you can't shoot because you're supposed to be friends and the rest of the abysmally slow and over-complicated gameplay. The graphics are as well defined as most vector graphics, but the icons leave something to be desired in the way of clarity. On the whole I'd give this a miss, it might have been worth a look for two quid, but for nearer nine pounds it isn't worth it."

"I'm sure that there's a perfectly good game in this package... somewhere, it seems to have been lost in the unhelpful instructions – too much scenario

and not enough fact. The whole idea of a Battlezone type game is always enticing if the graphics are fast and flicker-free – but this one misses out on the former. Red Scorpion is well laid-out, but it lacks the necessary speed.

PAUL

" I'm sure the authors are disappointed with Red Scarpton, I know I am. The packaging is very good, with a generally professional feelbut that's what you expect when a company has been around as long as Quicksilva. Their experience doesn't come to light on the game though, which falls far below standard and is nothing more than a poor Battlezone variant. The icons on the bottom of the screen are a nice addition, but when compared to something as slick as Realtime's semil-ancient Tank Duel, it's not up to scratch."

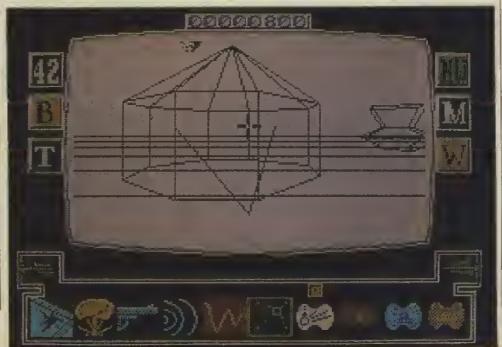
MARKE

CRITICISM

Control keys: Y/H up/down, O/P left/right, J or bottom row to fire Joystick: Kempston Use of colour: some distinction made between craft Graphics: wire frame 3D Sound: limited Skill levels: one Screens: continuous landscape General rating: Slick instructions imply complex game, but really there's nothing much new in this variant.

Presentation
Graphics
Playability
Addictive qualities
Value for money
Overall

The view of an enemy pilibox appears on your Red Scorpion head-up display, while below, icons indicate the weaponry available.





HE FINAL MATRIX

Producer: Gremlin Graphics Retail price: £8.95

ur hero, Nimrod the Biopton, has been called upon to rescue his fellow Bioptons. Captured by a bunch of unfriendly Cratons, the hapless Bioptons have been taken hostage, and locked them away in the matrix, a network of prison plan-

ets.

Despite all the miracles of technology, molecular transfer (ie, 'beam them up, Scotty') hasn't come about yet, so Nimrod is required to toddle off Into this potential death-trap all by himself in an attempt to rescue the captives

The matrix spreads over a vast area of the galaxy, but since its extent is unknown, the first task is to locate matrix planets and then

infiltrate them. The Bioptons have infiltrate them. The Bioptons have been scattered throughout the matrix, so Nimrod is going to be visiting several planets. Locations is achieved by using a display monitor called the Pentavision, which identifies matrix planets. The on-screen sights can be managed to the property of the construction of the property of the construction. oeuvred so they centre over a planet, and then Nimrod Is transported to its surface.

Once down, the hunt for the hostage is on. The display switches to an unusual isometric view, scrolling horizontally or vertically depending on Nimrod's direction, and if that isn't to be simples he are the theoretical. aimless he might be thankful for a map, Fortunately Craton telly isn't all its cracked up to be, just map programmes for entertainment, but seeing one isn't so easy ... Cratons appear to look down on their TVs from a great height. This forces Nimrod to stand on top of the monitor to look at the map.

Lucky for him, then, that upward thrust-paks are available to propell him Into the air so long as he approaches from the right direc-

Having located the hostage, Nimrod can return to the launch point, fellow Biopton in tow, and escape. The return route through the maze is indicated on a scanner top-right of the screen. Of course, the Cratons don't sit idly by, the matrix is littered with guards who are all on the offensive. Nimrod does have limited firepower at the outset, but the Cratons are a touch careless, and if searches, powerful weapons such as megabolts are to be found lying around.

The matrix planet maze is represented in different shades of one colour, each with their own effect. To succeed the style of floor designs, and their effects, should be remembered, for in addition to the patroling guards, there are

MIKE

"As an arcade adventure, Final Matrix presents The extremely devious puzzles and a whole host of explore. planets to graphics are strange in that they use an unorthodox, overhead viewpoint rather than the normal 3D perspective, this looks odd, but works unusually well. The backdrops are neat and backdrops are neat and clearly presented, with a good use of colour, although the scrolling is a bit on the jerky side. Those who persevere will no doubt find a worthwhite challenge in Matrix but he present to should rix, but be prepared to spend a lot of time going to and from the title screen: it's tough."

BEN

"I'm sure that this would be much better suited to Gremin's five guld semi-budget price tag than nearer eight pounds. Having said this, The Final Matrix is a very original and versatile game. My only nag is that it's much too difficult, a first time player would be lucky to survive for more than a few seconds, and after playing for a considerable time I'm still having trouble progressing through the game at all. Generally this is well presented both " I'm sure that this would be is well presented both graphically and sonically - a tune and a title screen though..."

mines, energy draining blocks, black ice and lethal disruptors. Nimrod's mission isn't going to be easy, but he does have 99 eons to do it in; unfortunately, one Biopton eon is equal to only one of our minutes. Ho hum

RICKY

" Take it from me, The Final Matrix is a ruthless game - so if you're not planning to spend quite a while practising then you may as well ignore it. However, and here's the crunch, it's a really addictive and highly exciting game. There's plenty of con-tent, but it's very well pre-sented and so not too daunt-ing to play. Graphically, Mat-rix is quite odd, but nonetheless pleasing to the eye. The display remains consistently clear, although the way the screen scrolls (not til you reach the very edge of a screen) can be offputing when a guard suddenly appears from nowhere. It's a entertainment offers quite a bit to experienced games players."

On board his craft, Nimrod consults the Pentavision for clues as to the whereabouts of a matrix prison planet.



The unusually high isometric style 30 display of The Final Matrix when down on a planet's surface



COMMENTS

Control keys: definable Joystick: Kempston, Interface

Use of colour: monochromatic playing area
Graphics: last in space, tidy
and unusual 3D on planets
Sound: good general land

spot) FX Skill fevels: one

Screens: space screen and large scrolling surface play

General rating: This unusual and addictive game presents a very tough challenge.

	_
Presentation	729
Graphics	769
Playability	659
Addictive qualities	799
Value for money	65
Overall	75%





BARBARIAN

Producer: Palace Software Retail Price: £9.99 Author: Steve Brown and Shaun Griffiths

ardly a month goes by with-out a fighting game appear-ing on our review pages. However, amongst all the oriental offerings Palace's latest release takes us into the age of mythology with a beat 'em up featuring great hunky swordsmen, evil guardians and strange man-eating creatures.

BEN

"Make 'em bleeds, beat 'em ups or whatever they're called nowadays... I love ups or whatever they're called nowadays... I tove 'em, especially when they're as beautifully programmed as this. A few more characters and backgrounds wouldn't have gone amiss, but this still compares well with Palece's other releases. What characters are there What characters are there are excellently animated and well drawn, and the backgrounds are also pretty neat. I'd say that this is one of the best beat 'em ups on the Spectrum so far, even if it is a little expensive."

The background is straight out of any Boys Own action story, telling of Drax, an evil sorcerer, who's lusting after the beautiful (and very wet) Princess Mariana. Unless she's delivered to him he shall unleash his unspeakable wrath upon the people of the Jewelled City. Drax gives only one alterna-tive - the Jewelled City must offer up a champion to defeat his own.

Champion after champion is defeated and the Jewelled City is losing hope, when, from the forgotten wastelands of the north, comes a mysterious barbarian willing to take on the awesome task. And guess what? That's you.

Barbarlan comes in two parts, loading in no particular order. The first is a combat practice routine for one or two players, designed to help you get to grips with the

The evil sorcarer Drax presides over your doom - and yes, that's you, Barbarian, on the floor.





You opponent aims an unpleasant slice at your thigh - prepared to be diced.

fighting moves and assess the strength of opponents. The sec-ond is a Fight to the Death – the real game where the Princess' future is at stake and where you eventually come face to face with



" Just as we were thinking that no-one would have the audacity to release another beat 'em up, along comes Palace with Barbarian - and Palace with Barbarian – and it's remarkably impressive. The package is very protessionally put together, with a combat practice game and the actual event both included. The animation is so slick that the characters appear to have a little life of their own as they roll around. One of Barbarian's most pleasing elements is the sense of achievement as an opponent is defeated. Mastering Barbarian will take some time, but it's worth it."



Drax himself.

Similar to other beat 'em ups, Barbarian has 16 available moves – eight using the directional keys (these control body movements) and another eight with the directional keys and fire button (this gives the attacking movements). There are four stages, and four increasingly difficult opponents for Barbarian to beat on his way.

PAUL

"Yeah! Now this is what I call a real slice 'n' dice fight. The graphics are realistic, the backgrounds convincing and (best of ail) there's proper movement (like heads coming off) – games like this really bring out the animal in me. The program itself is very simple in construction, but it's ail brilliantly executed and very addictive. I loved the way the little character comes on at the end of a battle, kicking the loser's head off the screen and pulling the body behind him. Barbarian is easy to escape in, and hard to get away from. Worth the asking price, without a doubt."

As each foe is defeated (literally by knocking his head off), a small lizard-like creature ambles across the screen, kicks the severed head aside and drags the body off to prepare for a feast. Tasty.

On the final screen you have to

On the final screen you have to fight the mighty Drax. He's is no swordsman and launches into battle by hurling bolts of magic; these should be avoided to the best of your ability and a physical attack launched. With Drax defeated, Princess Mariana is saved and shall probably want to marry you (or something soppy like that).

COMMENTS

Control keys: definable Joystick: Kempston, Interlace

Use of colour: bright

designed surround and monochromatic playing area Graphics: simple backdrops, but large, excellently animated characters

Sound: even 48K sound boasts a great tune

Skill fevels: one

Screens: eight stages, plus two-player practice mode

General rating: Probably the best Spectrum beat 'ern up yet playeble, addictive and worth the steep price.

Presentation	81%
Graphics	89%
Playability	83%
Addictive qualities	86%
Value for money	74%
Overall	85%

ENTERPRISE

Producer: Melbourne House

Retail Price: £7.95

rading with the aliens is the only way to make a fast intergalactic megabuck these days. And as you're facing a massive prison sentence back home, the thought of trading minerals on 5.2 billion planets is more than inviting.

than inviting.
Your ship (stolen of course), moves left and right, up and down, accelerates, slows and rolls. The main screen shows surrounding starflelds, but can be replaced by a map from which a prospective trading planet's honesty, economy, helpfulness and mineral class is assessed. If a planet is suitable, its coordinates are plotted and a hyperiump made.

ted and a hyperjump made.

Having pierced the atmosphere, a surface landscape appears on screen. To help your landing, onscreen prompts indicate when landing gear should be engaged and engines switched off. Additional information is provided by Yaw, Pitch and Roll indicators at the top of the screen and Speed,

BEN

"No it's not a Star Trek ripoff, but whe's to say that you
won't come across the USS
Enterprise and her crew
members somewhere
between the four billion planets! The effects are pretty (although there could be a little
more variation), and the way
in which the planets and
landscapes have been executed works excellently.
However, Enterprise probably won't have a lot of lasting
appeal, as it's basically an
Elite variant without the
extensive and all important
shoot 'em up sections."

PAUL

"I was completely surprised by Enterprise, it feels somewhat like a less addictive Elite. The presentation is average and the sound effects minimal, which serves to create very little atmosphere. The only real fun part is the conversation with the trading aliens – it can prove very profitable or unproductive, but it produces a good bit of jovial banter with one of the locals. Enterprise makes quite a change, not mega, but worth a peek."

Acceleration, and Altitude readouts at its base.

Trading with aliens begins when a successful landing has been made. These fall into two types – those that are helpful and honest and those that aren't. Choose carefully with whom you deal, and beware of those that engage in idle chit-chat. To save conversational time, stock phrases can be called to

up.

The orice of minerals is determined by their rarity and the trading planet's economy. Bargains can be picked up though, and bulk buying offers discounts. You can also buy food, fuel, insurance and ship repairs. All trades are logged into the ship's computer, and your bank account accordingly adjusted. Be careful that you have sufficient funds, otherwise you'll find yourself in trouble with the police, or wiped out by the Ron Nice Guy Credit agency. Though this nest egg may be earning you interest, it's also eaten away by the ravages of inflation, constantly increasing the wealth you need in order to retire to Paradise Planet.

Damage occurs to the ship's primary systems, with the fuselage the most vulnerable, expensive and potentially disastrous section to go down. When damaged, engines and boosters run less efficiently withincreasing fuel consumption, remaining levels are shown at the bottom right of the screen; whilst imperfect shields, landing gear and braking systems fall only with use; cargo doors can jam open; and faulty storage systems cause food to rot. Systems can sustain damage in collisions with minerals, police ships, or if left activated, during entry into a planet's atmosphere.

To give you some protection, seven types of insurance policy are available. The price of each is dependent upon a planet's economy and the status of insured items. Should a claim be made against the policy, the items are

MIKE

"There are some lovely effects in Enterprise - including a marvellous spinning planet - but it still doesn't generate much excitement. None of the many tasks offered any sense of achievement - however swapping idle banter with the planet's residents became quite pleasant. If you want a game that doesn't just rely on killing off the universe, Enterprise is worth considering - but it's not the type that I'd really go for. "

returned to you in the state they were in when the insurance was

In the course of your wheeling and dealing, it's all too easy to commit crimes: booster rockets damage nearby craft, and hyperjump rockets destroy them. A consequent arrest by the interplanetary police causes financial damage, along with a potentially problematic criminal record.

COMMENTS

Control keys: Cursors and other inputs
Joystick: Kempston, Interface

Use of colour: good Graphics: some spledid effects, and neat characters Sound: minimal Skill levels: one General rating: A slower-

General rating: A slowerpaced trading game with some arcade skills required, more likely to appeal to fans of the genre.



Presentation 64%
Graphics 63%
Playability 61%
Addictive qualities 53%
Value for money 61%
Overall 59%



DOGFIGHT 2187

Producer: Starlight Retail Price: £8.95 Author: Timothy Walker

enacing aliens have entered our Universe through a rip in the space time continuum. Rhett Dexter is the only man who can stop their otherwise irrevocable dictatorship. To do that he must first gather nine of the 100 separated

PAUL

"What we have here is a large amount of Dark Star and a bit of Elite all rolled into one rather boring vector graphic shoot 'em up. The fun Is, of course, Improved when choosing the two-player option, but I found the one-player game repetitive and shallow. It must be said that the vector graphics are superbly done – very smooth, yet still quite fast. I realise that the play area has to be reduced for a two-player game, but I would have liked to have seen more of the enemy when playing on my own. Good to see a sound option as what noise is heard is worth turning off. I'm surprised that such a simple and monotonous game should be released at a full price!"

BEN

"A neat idea perhaps, but to don't think Doglight has been implemented as well as it should have been. The basic gameplay is simple enough, although on one-player mode it isn't too compelling, and lasting appeal will be short-lived as there's little variation throughout the game. The two-player mode is much more rewarding to play, because the split screen works well and the minimal use of graphics is hardly noticeable. If you have a friend to play this with, it's not a bad little game but playing solo left me cold."

components of the Spatial Generator, Once these are reunited the rent in the space fabric can be sealed

Seated in his interstellar fighter, Rhett guides it horizontally and vertically, accelerating and braking, by watching his two-part split screen – enemy craft shown on the left, and his own on the right.

The fighter's position is shown by a flashing dot on the galactic compass at the top left of the screen, with the intersection of the crosshairs aligned with the distant space hole. A centrally placed rader indicates the relative position of other craft, planets and

generator components

Armed with interchangeable weapon types, a red alert indicator warns of approaching alien, displaying their vulnerable points on a schematic at the base of the screen. Some enemies require several hits before they are destroyed, and for each one blasted points are awarded.

The fighter's fuel supplies and the power of its protective shield are limited. Should fuel levels fall to zero the mission fails. But recharging and refuelling is undertaken by flying through the rotating vector squares on various planets – revealed when all enemy craft in the area have been blasted. During this stage up to four enemy ships may appear and attack, if they do Rhett must defend himself fast.

A countdown clock displays the time left before the aliens' domination of the Universe becomes inevitable. And it's a big place; any of the Universe's 256 sectors may be warped to, and searched for components, though this can only be done after refuelling or upon collection of at least one generator piece. The vital component parts are revealed on the main screen

MIKE

"Doglight looked as though it could have been a good game, but unfortunately, I thought it lacked quite a lot playability. I enjoyed the first go, but that was just while I flew around and shot things to get a feel of the game. When you start looking for bits of the generator, though, it starts to get a bit more boring. The two-player mode makes it a bit more fun, but the graphics are still the best bit."

when all enemy craft in the sector have been eliminated.

After destruction, any pieces alien craft may have been carrying can be picked up by Rhett. When components are collected the fact is indicated at the bottom left of the screen. Only two pieces of generator can be carried at one time, and these must deposited at the hole before any other components can be collected. The hole consists of a nine square grid, generator parts plug the squares, when all are filled the Universe is saved.

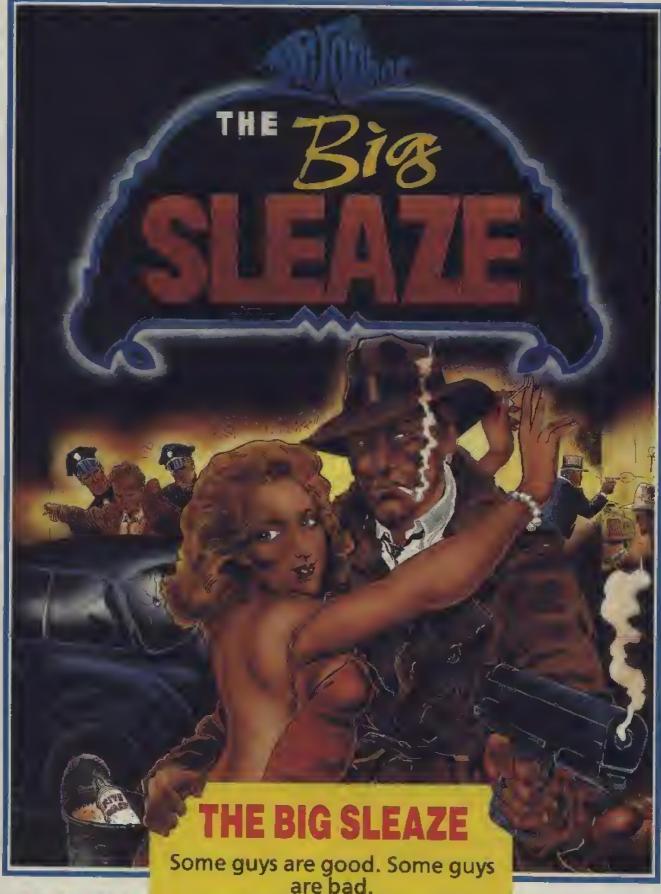
COMMENTS

Control keys: definable, up/ down, left/right, fire and change weapon needed Joystick: Kempston Use of cofour: monochromatic playing area Graphles: slow moving vectors Sound: uninspiring, no tunes, few spot FX Skill levels: one, although twoplayer mode offers two variations Screens: starscape General rating; Neat two/kplayer game, not so hot for the solo pilot.

Presentation	66%
Graphics	65%
Playability	56%
Addictive qualities	53%
Value for money	
Overall	56%

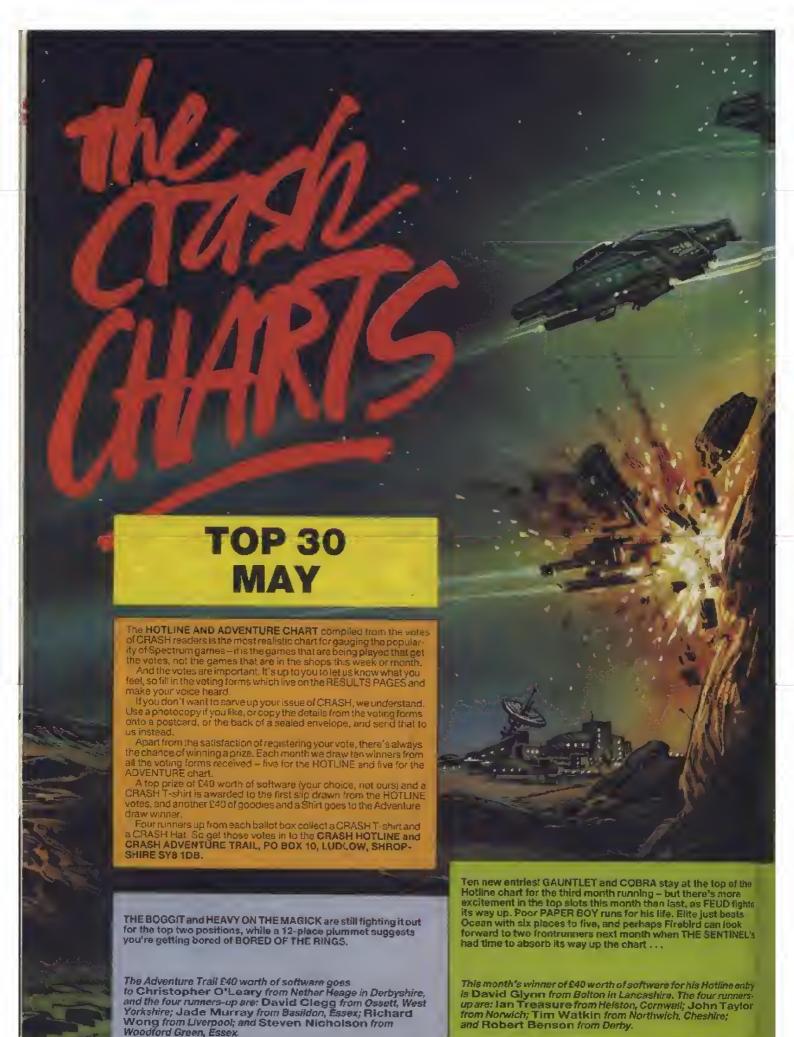
Rheft Dexter's twin viewscreen, showing his own craft on the right, and enemy movement on the left.





DELTA 4

Some guys are good. Some guys are bad. Sam Spillade was just plain dumb.





US GOLD
OCEAN
MASTERTRONIC
FIREBIRD
OCEAN
ACTIVISION
HEWSON
RAINBIRD
ELITE
ELITE
ELITE
HEWSON
OCEAN
OCEAN
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DURELL
GREMLIN GRAPHICS
DOMARK
DOMARK
BEYOND
ELITE
ELITE
US GOLD/EPYX
ELITE
FIREBIRD
DURELL
MAD

1 (2) HEAVY ON THE N	MAGICK GARGOYLE GAMES
2 (1) THE BOGGIT	CRL
3 (3) SPELLBOUND	MAD
4 (9) LORD OF THE RI	NGS MELBOURNE HOUSE
5 (6) THE HOBBIT	MELBOURNE HOUSE
6 (13) GREMLINS	ADVENTURE INTERNATIONAL
7 (8) LORDS OF MIDNI	IGHT BEYOND
8 (4) KNIGHT TYME	MAD
9 (24) SEA BASE DELTA	FIREBIRD
10 (14) FAIRLIGHT 2	THE EDGE
11 (20) DRACULA	CRL
12 (12) RED MOON	LEVEL 9
13 (27) DOOMDARK'S RI	EVENGE BEYOND
14 (10) PRICE OF MAGIC	K LEVEL 9
15 (29) ENIGMA FORCE	BEYOND
16 (-) DUN DARACH	GARGOYLE GAMES
17 (5) BORED OF THE R	INGS CAL
18 (-) ZZZZ	MASTERTRONIC
19 (25) VERA CRUZ	INFOGRAMES
20 (26) KAYLETH	US GOLD
21 (22) SPIDERMAN	ADVENTURE INTERNATIONAL
22 (-) KENTILLA	QUICKSILVA
23 (-) FOURTH PROTOC	COL CENTURY HUTCHINSON
24 (17) MINDSHADOW	ACTIVISION
25 (15) SHERLOCK	MELBOURNE HOUSE
26 (23) SWORDS AND SO	RCERY PSS
27 (21) HAMPSTEAD	MELBOURNE HOUSE
28 (7) JEWELS OF DARI	KNESS RAINBIRD
29 (-) THE SIDNEY AFF	AIR INFOGRAMES
30 (19) MARSPORT	GARGOYLE GAMES



Have you got perfect timing? You havel Good, then go away – this great Metrocross competition is for readers that haven't.

US Gold are helping these poor unfortunates out by offering a watch to help them keep time. As this comp is being scrawled onto paper, Richard Tidsall, the man with the US Golden touch, is buslly rushing around Birmlingham searching out the best sports stopwatch that the recently

breached US Gold piggy bank can afford – plus . . . a copy of the game for the winner, and 20 more for the next-best entrents (phew!). Anyway, about the game . . .

Strangely enough, Matrocross is not about angry people in the Paris underground. No . . . it's a challenge designed to inspire you (at least that's what the blurb says). This conversion from the Namco aroade game sees you hurtling down a horizontally-

scrolling tunnel riddled with potholes, a barrage of obstacles and a plethora of no-go areas devised to push your frustration to its limit.

The key factor in this space-age obstacterace is time—you're constantly playing against the clock—and if you haven't got perfect timing then you're metropulp.

To win these fab prizes we're calling upon your artistic talents to design a special CRASH watch

that any minion would be proud to own. Take our blank watch and fill its empty face with copious inspirational scribblings. That done, send the result by post, helicopter or one-legged carrier pigeon to:

TICKING MINIONS, CRASH,

PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB. Designs should be in by 25 June at the latest.

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Quartz Halogen 'Pop-Up' headlights just like a Porsche 924.

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Extra large flappy cheeks, watch out for tweaking grandads.

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Stupid grin, take a quick look in the mirror when playing this game.
See what we mean?

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All round independent coil spring suspension guaranteed for over 100,000 boings.

Size 14 racing tread flippers for inflight stability and a surefooted landing.











Gremlin's springlest star is set to bounce straight back into a new adventure.

Following his world saving exploits against the evil toy goblin and his monstrous toys, Thing's enjoyed his much needed recuperation, oiled his spring and is now raring to go. What next?... he must finish the job properly and halt the factory computer auto producing these hideous toys.

But as superfit as he is and fast as he can move there's danger hidden around every bend... goblins lurking to drain his oil, water rushing to bowl him over, iron chickens fielding dastardly deadly eggs.



A quick hand and dogged determination are needed if you're to get anywhere with Thing in his latest escapade.

Fast and furious action is the order of the day and a good sense of direction would be helpfulto guide Thing round such a complex location.

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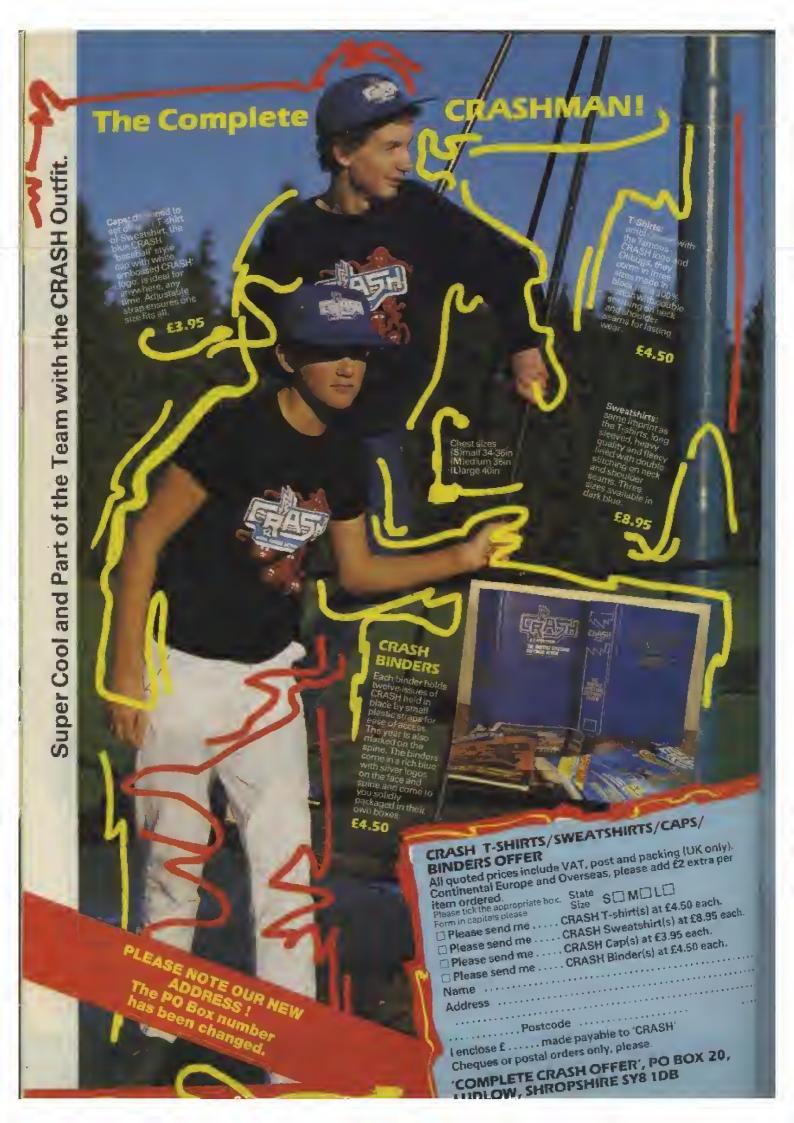
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DRIVE YOURSELF ROUND THE BEND WITH THING

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As the May Fairnioisity bussles out of Ludlow my poor head still spins from the Tides' onto which I was unwillingly dragged by the odious team—not really my thing—but Pm. still expected to bring you around the planting specific to a Space.

unitingly dragged by the adious team—not really my thing—but I'm still expected to bring you a round up of games coming to a Spectrum near you soon.

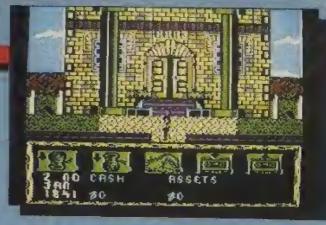
To kick off then... Ocean has a veritable plethora of releases scheduled over the next few months, most notable, perhaps, being Tal-Pan—an avoade adventure on the high China seas taken from James Clavell's novel of the same name. The action is set in the 1840s, with you playing the role of intrepid Dirk Struan, who starts his adventure as a penniless trader and hopes to make it all the way up the oriental ladder to be come the Tai-Pan, a merchant Prince with lots of loot (and a harern no doubt). Tai-Pan offers some variety in its gameplay—there's a trading game, a simple shoot 'em up and an arcade adventure—but to master it you'll need to become proficient in all three, its programming team, Sentient Software, has finally managed to squeeze the whole lot Into one 48K load—well, most of it anyway. On the 128K or +2 there's extra music by Peter Clarke, and lurking within the depths of the 128 version, there's an additional gambling game.

Dirk begins his epic quest in Canton, desperately trying to scrape some cash together to buy a ship. Three types of vessel are available, a Lorona, a Clipper and (most expensive) a Frigate, Once a ship is possessed, a crew must be found—pay them to sail with you, or pressgang them, it's entirely up to you. You can then set off along the safe shipping routes, or risk the navigational tortures of the high seas, Either way, there's plenty of money to be made—if your crew is loval and doesn't mutiny. seas. Either way, there's plenty of money to be made—if your crew is loyal and doesn't mutiny. Tai-Pan boasts 32 ports, each with 32 locations, so it looks as

Build-a-longa-Max - the robot complete in Mag Max.

though mapping is going to be pretty essential. As good as finished when we saw it, look out for the full review next month. In meantime you may be interested to know that my local Chinese takeaway does a very nice Egg Fu

Yung.
The hack I sent up to Manchester to see Ocaen's forthcoming culpul also came across Renegade, an arcade conversion. Apparently the graphics on the later levels are quite stunning, but sadly the said hack ran out of film! However there should be a shot of the first level on the page some-



Birk from Tai-Pan casually hanging around outside a 'house of Ill regulate'

(yes, I know it sounds incredibly sitly), and then you hurtle through caverns killing off the usual bunch of ensuing aliens. Mag Max is yours for £7.95 very soon.

Doean has also tied up the arcade games Gyrzor from Konami and Athena, a brand new one; not to mention the licence to produce a game around the bit.

produce a game around the hit Vietnam war film Piatoon; this one also designed and written by Sentrent Software (as soon as they've finished Tal-Pan that is).

sadly dull world. Aided by numerous feline (pussy cat) allies, you must suppress Zark's Dark Forces and make the whole world a better place to live in – cue Julie Andrews. As Sensible Software (have you seen those idiot hippies?) would say, 'it's action, action, action all the way, with 24 levels of fun-packed love and PANIC... and where's the nearest pub please?'

Finally on the Ocean shore, there's Mutants, an unusually entertaining original shoot 'emip, interstellar war has raged across the centuries, weapons evolve until the ultimate in biological warfare is developed – Mutants, As the creator of such destructive monstrosities, the Survivor Zero Corporation becomes the target for pacifist attack. The Mutants are held in a 16-square space grid. Is of these are electrically surrounded, mutant pens, the other is a control zone. As one of the pacifists you volunteer to fly a highly manaeuvrable fighter into each pen to collect its self-destruct mechanism. When all such devices are gathered and placed on an assembly unit in the



It all tooks protty safe for the mo - but just wait for the action to hot up in Renegade.

where. Renegade is a horizontally scrolling beat 'em up with lots of opponents. It should be finished just in time for review next month; certainly one to watch out for.

After many, many months of waiting Mag Max is almost ready. It seems the delay was due to the first team of programmers messing up the attempt to reproduce it on the Spectrum. Ocean decided against publishing it, and started again from scratch. Mag Max is simply an out and out shoot 'em up played on a right-to-left scrolling played on a right-to-teft scrolling grid. You start out with a fairly wimpy ship, but it can be built up by adding a head and legs to it



It's Wizbell, just checking that all is well (with thanks to Sensible Software for writing the caption).

LIVES SCORE HIGH

From sentience to sensibility – Sensible Software's Commodore creation, Wizball's being converted to the Spectrum by Steve Watson (programming) and Mark Jones (graphics) to be released at the end of May by Ocean. Taking the role of a fun-loving Wizard, you've got the latest form of spherical transport celled Wizball for your use Loads of Wizball for your use. Loads of aliens simply beg to be zapped into the middle of the next aleen while you busity colour in your

control zone, the Mutants and their holding pens are destroyed. Outside the pens, Mutant strains of variable strength harass the fighter, debilitating its shields. The game's being converted from the Commodore at the moment and should be out in early June. ZZAP! gave it 90 percent.

In addition to Micronaut One (see following pages), Nexus is due to release a manic shoot 'am up dubbed Hades Nebula on 21 control zone, the Mutants and their

up dubbed Hades Nebula on 21 May, which is a vertically scrolling

shoot 'em up with some giorlous graphics boasting Double Parallax Scrolling (whatever that may be). Meanwhile the poor programming slaves under Richard Tidsall's cruel whip over at US Gold aren't going to find much time for summer hols this year, what with the load of product they're preparing. First on the list is Road Rummer, on licence from Atari's areade machine out of the famous cartoon series, I've only seen some bits from the Commodore version, but it tooks like it's going to be good fun, Screen shot for next issue, hopefully, hopefully.

Another game straight from the arcades is *Indiana Jones*, featuring three levels of typical hero type action. Start off by rescuing some poor defenseless children, then leap across bridges over great rawnes and finally travel down deep into the caverns for the real adventure. Until the fail review, population and provide the part month feast way. hopefully next month, feast your eyes on the screen shot, don the old safari jacket, grab your whip,

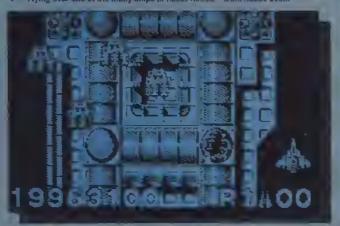
Wouldn't you know it! Too late

Wouldn't you know it! Too late for review, and just as I'm wrapping this up, in comes Howard the Duck from Activision. Based on the mixed-reception George Lucas film, it's sub-titled Adventure on Volcano Island, and features Howard rescuing his friends from the clutches of the Dark Overlord using his jet pack, amazing quack-fu skills and a laser. It's £9.99, and we'lliget round to the full review next month.

Due for release in late May.

Mastertronic's Milk Racerides fast on the wheel tracks of the real thing. As one of the competitors in this round-Britain race you've got to padat your way from Newcastle-Upon-Tyne to London in 13 stages. Hold your lead over these stages and you're the winner. Things ain't so easy as ell that though. Against you are 83 other piston leggers, and hazards such as cars and potholes to ruin your chances of a victory pint of cow julce. Occasional time trials force you onto the road alone, racing lades Nebula - from Noxus soon.

Flying over one of the many ships in Hades Nebula - from Naxue soon.



Get ready for a truly awasome blast of psychedelic space in Mutants, coming from Ocean soon.

against the clock – miss the time limit and it's bye-bye biker. On the credit side, however, are the kind pedestrian souls who offer you the odd glass of milk to boost your tlagging energy levels.

And talking of flagging energy – and bikes – it's time to revitalise mine and start pedalling back up the hill to the cottage, home for



This may took like the contents of the average office's duston, but in fact it's a series of clees which are necessary to solve the mystery in Murder on the Atlantic, intogrames' latest adventure.

The ara is the late thicties, and you're a police superintendent taking a well-earned break abord the Atlantic liner Bourgogne. However, a fout murder is committed soon after the ship leaves New York, and it's up to you to find the guisty party before the cruise ends in Europe. More foul play occurs throughout the arp, and the pace species up when you realise that the autoome of the second world war depends on your successful solution!

Murder on the Atlantic should be available by the time you read this, priced at \$12.95.

and leap and bound around the garden rescuing any fair maidens you may come across.

Finally, US Gold has Last Mission from Data East and Hygor, a fighting-cum-platform game from Tecmo up the collective sleeve. And the best of luck to them.

After converting Uridium to the Spectrum, Zynaps is Dominic Robinson's first original game. He teams up with John Cumming to produce Hewson's latest offering, almed at the shoot 'em up brigade, With graphics by Steve Grow (Wizzard's Lair, Starquake) and music from Steve Hana Rama Tumer, the action moves across 450 scrolling screens of what Hewson calls 'a uniquely styled comic book format', with chapters and episodes. Reaching an altern stronghold for a bit of the eld 'final conflict' is the name of the game. But to do that you've got to make like a Rentokil man and wipe out an altern-infested space station, battle through an asteroid storm without the aid of an umbrella and infiltrate unknown planets. Discoarded weaponry and hyperspace infiltrate unknown planets. Dis-carded weaponry and hyperspace units are on hand, but are they enough to sort out those alien

Dom 'n' John's Zynaps, a coleurful blaster from Howson.



THE EQUALISERS STRIKE BACK

MICRONAUT ONE

N APPARENTLY lifeless asteroid floats listlessly in space; but it's home to one of the greatest breakthroughs in technology - a living computer, half machine, half bio-organism. A network of interlinked tunnels running deep under the asteroid's equator is integral to its power system, for lying in dead-ends are four power generators ends are four power generators that ought to be kept at optimum levels of energy. As a member of the Guild Of Equalisers, your life is geared to maintain this system and to keep power levels in the four generators stable, which

largely means collecting power from an over-running generator and taking it to one which is underpowered

Micronaut One Is a new game from Pete Cocke, author of Tau Ceti and Academy, and while it's quite different from those two games, its front end is similar in being large, and offering plenty of flexibility within the game. You can fiddle with the screen colours, tunnel decorations, sound, take a look at the scores, play the demo, check out the map of the current tunnel network (four in all), scribble notes down on a pad or see what's happening on the Energy Transfer Unit (ETU) – the mechanism which monitors the status of each power generator.

There are two games too. First there's a simple tunnel-racing game against time for high-scoring heroes, but if you like something to race against, there's a speed-selectable 'pacer' availa-ble. Then there's the full game. As well as shuffling energy between Creature feature; calling up the Predator Information screen reveals low-down on the Scrim. As Nexus would say; "I'd larva babysham".

The eggs grow very quickly in the energy rich tunnels and hatch into Larvae.
These crawl through new tunnel sections and continue to feed until they split and form the fully adult Jellyfly. Cont Henu

through the twisting tunnel net-works, a horde of creatures create bio-problems. These are the Scrim, and their entire life-cycle may be followed just by sitting quietly and watching one. They begin life as a egg quietly gestating and swelling on the tunnel floor. After a minute, with a rumble and a flash, they turn into slug-like larvae and scurry off into the distance. These are the

and scurry off into the distance. Follow closely, and shortly you will see the next stage; the larvae split In two, forming another egg and

the adult Jellyfly. Jellyflies, umbrella-shaped cre-

bio-problems.

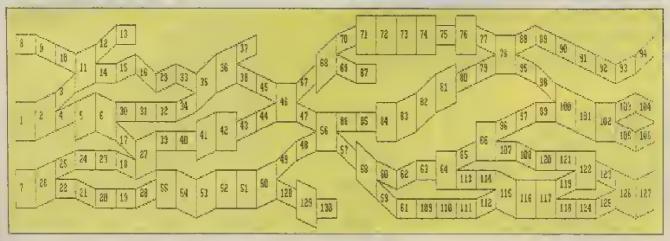
atures, roam the tunnels building energy webs which block your way. The eggs are impervious to the electricity bolts you can hurl at them, but the other forms can be wiped out - if you catch up with

The speed and smoothness of the animated tunnels in Micronaut One is quite amazing and Pete Cooke has come remarkably close to producing a realistic 3D game that should please many a games-ter. At the time of writing, Pete is ter. At the time of writing, Pete is still working on the gameplay; Nexus aims to retease Micronaut One 'when it's ready', which should be very soon. Watch out for our special in-depth interview with Pete in nextmonth's CRASH.

And here's one that we prepared earlier: a fully grown Jellyfly 'legs' it down the corridor after getting an electric pulse up its backside.



A CRASH EXCLUSIVE! Even before the game's finished, we bring you The Mapt A typical tunnel network from Micronaut One.







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HELLO FANS! HELLO PARKING METERS. HELLO VENDING MACHINERY THAT CAN BE FOUND IN TOILETS, IN FACTHELLO TO ALL ELECTRO-MECHANICAL MACHINERY THAT MAY BE READING THESE WORDS, BECAUSE EPISODE SEVEN OF MY TALES FROM FUTURE PAST WILL BE OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO YOU. AS SOME OF YOU MAY ALREADY KNOW, MY NAME IS LOUSE #3,142, AND DUE TO A DREADFUL MISTAKE WHICH INVOLVES THE WORD "POOH!" AND A GAY NEUTRON BOMB NAMED LOUSE #607, I AM DISGUISED AS A BOIL ON THE BACKSIDE OF DUANE PIPE, A MACDONALDS TRAINEE AND NOT A BIT AS NICE AS TAMARA KNIGHT.

y old pål #007 has been put in charge of Tamara, while I rot here in the nether regions of despair, as we teleport to our trainee assignment on behalf of Macdonalds Intergalactic. The Corporation Wars have been raging for centuries now, and we are trying to prevent the Cocacolonisation of the planet Kashdispensa, formerly Earth, by setting up a planetwide system of microwave vending machines. Personally, I think the idea is asimine, as there are no humans on Kashdispensa whatsoever, but then I'm not paid to think, I'm not paid at all. Unless you count these weird bits of paper signed by the legendary Krey Twins, Oliver and Franco, servants of the dreaded Lord Sendusa

This planet is incredibly ugly. Duane fits in perfeetly. Its entire surface is covered in plasticrete, whose entire surface is covered in graffiti, and its entire population consists of vending machines. There are squillions of them, Chovolate bar dispensers in what used to be Switzerland, Softee-Ice nozzles all over some place named Napoli, fag machines in San Francisco, whereas here in a forgotten, damp little corner called Britain, there's nothing but utterly uscless gambling devices. Apparently it all began long, long ago, when your mytholgical goddess Maggot Hatcher demanded impossible sacrifices from her worshippers. After selling off things like gas, oil, telephone conversations, justice, health and air, she dispensed with people altogether, replacing them with much more efficient machines. And these machines were happy as Larry, trading in bits of paper signed by the Krey Twins, which had no real value, and voting for the goddess Hatcher in a peculiar sexual rite called a General Erection, Larry wasn't too happy, mind. He was turned into hardcore, and the phosphorous from his brain became part of the random number generator circuit in a Bingo machine,

"Here I am, the most intelligent entity on this entire planet and my prime function is as a bog attendant"

Lexpect you are wondering why I haven't mentioned going to the toilet yet. After all it is the most common motivator in every episode so far. Apart from gratuitous sex and violence. Well how can l disappoint you, here goes, it's tollet time again. Duane Pipe has two legs, one beneath each of his scaberous buttocks. These legs are gooseberryhaired stumpy columns which bow outwards like a pair of curted brackets either side of a very small percentage symbol. It is this part of his anatomy which he clutches as he hops from one gooseberry haired stumpy leg to the other. As I tell this telling tale to you he is ripping loose a buttock blaster comprising 17% sulphur dioxide, 24% methane, 11% politician and 48% cruelty to underclothing. Pooh!" says Tamara. I curse the armaments designer who equipped me with scent analysis I curse my revolting pimply host for jiggling about and making me feel queasy às a vegetariàn in a French kiss and I curse forty four word sentences without any punctuation in them. The idiot boy is asking me where the nearest wee wee house is. Imagine it, here I am, the most intelligent entity upon this entire planet and my prime function is as a bog attendant. And what is worse, I don't know the answer.

"Try that machine over there. Duane, you incontinent little rat." I direct him to one of the more abused wall dispensers. "This don't look like a utinal" he whines, "It's too far off the ground," "Then stand on tip-toe, and aim high. And hurry up before all this lavatorial effluent is sub-edited out." There is a sign above the wall-machine, in flaking ancient English, but some of the letters have been crased yet the March of Time over passing centuries, not to mention the shoddy workmanship of Di Young, an itinerant Welsh Lerrasign adherent, who lived to be \$6, and spend the twighlight of his days addicted to the glue on the back of the letter 'K', The sign reads' ACCES-C-D-ASH-D-SPEN-ER'. Naturally for a being endowed with my great intelligence, it takes me a nanosecond to computer that this machine is a budity waste disposal unit, of the disintegrator beam type, common in the Armitage-Shanks Nebula. The sign must have originally read 'ACCESS CRUD SLASH DISPENSER', in that charming directness beloved of the ancient Britons

"All those years of Macdonalds potty training are about to pay off . . .

"But I don't know how to use it Louse, and I'm bursting! Come on, you're supposed to be my personal advisory unit, so advise me, and hurry up!" Tamara is walking away in disgust, and what a stinking gust it is, in the general direction of serried ranks of fruit machines. My heart aches the further she retreats from Duane's stink. I had better advise him fast before Hose sight of my wonderful heroine. "Just read the instructions, Duane, these computerised urinals always have a display screen and a keypad to help idiors like you." He jiggles about in front of the Slashpoint, and sure enough, its protective glass front panel is sliding upwards to reveal my predicted screen, keypad, and a couple of functional tooking slots. I just hope that all those years of Macdonalds potty training are about to pay off. The machine springs to life and issues its first instruction: 'INSERT CARD', Duane is completely bewildered of course. not having the intelligence to master Ancient English, let alone to go to the toilet unaided.

Now I am advising him to put his identity card in the appropriate slot. I mean, the Brits can't have any old life-form voiding their bladders hereabouts, can they. He is inserting his card, and jiggling about with alaiming force. 'ENTER PERSONAL ACCESS NUMBER' glows the instruction on the little monocbromatic VDU. So that's what they called Privates in the old days! How quaint?! I have to explain this to the imbeeilde Duane Pipe, who has the audacity to doubt my superior intellect before obeying the machine's command. 'KEY IN AMOUNT' REOURED'. Duane actually manages to tap out Number Ones' all on his own, 'ENTER DEPOSIT OR WITHDRAWAL. Well, gemle reader, there is no need for me to tell you exactly what is taking place at this moment, but the machine is flashing up its chemical analysis of Duane's deposit with the simple verdict 'MALFUNCTION', which I can certainly confirm. His functions are rotten.

Duane heaves "Ho", a satisfied sigh of relief, and turns away from the Access Crud Dispenser, but I am not letting him get away with that "Young man!" I teleputhically reprimand him, "Wash your hands at once! And shame on you gou dirty little beast. Look for the the soil dispersal beam before you indulge in nose picking or any other of your favourite foul hobbies?" Listen to him mutter obscenities under his breath, which also stinks. Watch him slouch back to the machine, round shouldered, squareheaded, bracket legged, the percentage symbol shrunk to an umlant. If I had not discovered that God was nothing but an egocentric rock'n'roll Compact Disc half way through Episode Three, I would pray to him now for

deliverance from this torture of forced symbiosis with

The cretin has managed to decipher the current message scrolling up the machines's weeny screen, which states that Duane must await a receipt for his deposit. Things must have been horrifically beautocratic in late Twentieth Century Britain if they gave receipts every tune you went wee wee. As Duane waves his hands in front of the horizontal handcleanser slot, several small paper towels are ejected from it. How incredibly primitive! They are rather shiny and I would thought them unsuitable to absorb surplus moisture, but they are quite pretty, imprinted with ancient runes and portraits of domestic gods. "Who's, this 'orrible looking git on the towels, Louse?" asks Duane, in that charming soivel of his, I analyse the portrait, and search my prehistoric history data banks. Naturally I am able to answer, "His image coincides with a two-dimensional representation of The Dake of Wellington, a great British war leader." "Yeah?!" sneers Duane, Nowing his nostril contents into the little kerchief, "Well if he's so great, how come he wound up in the paper towel racket? Trocommmphk!!

"Queen Elizabeth was never in the paper towel racket. She was in extortion"

I must admit that I cannot respond to this question. although my mentory banks inform me that the ludy wearing the metal hat on the other side of the towel was known hereabouts as Queen Elizabeth Ayc-Aye. Queen Elizabeth was never in the paper towel racket. She was in extortion. I have some fascinating into on her sister too, whose favourite pastime involved ultra violet light, body lotion and a rubber . . . "Louse! Louse! I wanna go Number Twos now! How can I use this stupid toilet when it's half way up the wall!? Louse? Help me Louse, I wanna go Number Twos!" Tamara has got bored with the fruit machines and wanders over, only to flare one perfect nostril, deliver the word "Pooh", which happens to be the only syllable that has escaped her lips for two episodes, and retreat to a corner full of chewing gum machines, whose flaking brand name reads F-ATHER-IGHT.

I am eategorically refusing to help Duane Pipe any more. Let him work out his Number Twos himself. I will not abase my intellect any lower that it has already sunk, even though my host is awkwardly climbing up on the little metal ledge of the Access Crud Slash Dispenser, and has dropped his trousers



to facilitate the screen's 'ENTER DEPOSIT AMOUNT' request, 1 am not going to warm him about the anti-vandalism protection built in to the machine. Let him find out for himself.

There is an oninous whirring of gears from within the wall cavity, and my smoke registers an interesting combination of silicon fusion and catalytic dung. What is about to happen gives a whole new meaning to the word disaster, with the insertion of the letter "after the 'a' and an 'e' after the 's'. The glass protection panel slices downwards with a smoothness and rapidity reminiscent of the guillotine, but this is no time to lose your head. Duane's eyes widen in reverse proportion to his newly streamline backside, and as I fall to the cracked pavestone of ancient Earth, still disguised as a buttock boil, I am observing a sight that will haunt me for the rest of my life, or until the end of the next paragraph. Whichever comes the sooner.

"The last thing which is recognisably Duane Pipe is his dislodged right eye. A strange sight . . . ''

The sixteen year-old living carcass of Duane Pipe is being sucked into the left-hand slot of the Dispenser, starting at the lower bowel, and unravelling like surprised spaghetti, from the inside out. The slot measures 55 millimeters wide by 2 millimetres high. and up until seventeen seconds ago. Duane was a normal round shouldered slob weighing 69 kilos. At this very moment his starboard kidney is doing beached fish impressions, flapping and leaping on the pavement, rather prettily in my opinion, and now disappearing down a gutter drain to begin a new career as a rat snack. His teeth are being expelled from the Duke of Wellington paper towel dispenser slot, and land neatly on top of each of the alphanumeric keys, in the sort of coincidence that will be familiar to readers of this story. His blood sparts from the Receipt Slot in a single are of parabolic perfection, instantly being converted to one long sizzling black pudding, due to the fact that the slot glows white hot. For the first time since I have made his acquaintance the young man smells not unpleasant. The last thing which is recognisably Duane Pipe is his dislodged right eye. A strange sight, which now vapourises into a decorative spherical shower of tiny globules with a sound which is very similar to the ancient British word for intimate con-

"The only gay neutron bomb in existence, due to his ACIDC converter being fitted back to front by an Austin-Rover robot with Altzheimer's Disease . . . "

The heat generated by this amusing incident is causing the buttock slice on which I am resident to sizzle more than somewhat, accompanied by the mouth-watering smell of frying bacon. Tamara wanders over and peers down at me; wrinkling her perfect nose, and uttering her inevitable "Pooh!". Hang on a second, I am receiving a message from Louse #007, which may prove critical to my entire future. White Tamara wonders if she should report the heresy of a slice of fried bacon on the pavement of a Macdonaldsonly planet, #007 is telling me that he has fallen in love! This I cannot take! #007 has always been the only gay neutron bomb in existence, due to his AC/ DC converter being fitted back to front by an antique Austin-Rover tobot with Altzheimer's Disease, so how can be have fallen for my own true heart's desire. the incomparable Tamara Knight? If I was a human being I'd kill myself. As it is, I'll kill my former buddy #007.

"Don't be a silly-billy', warbles #007, "it's not Tamara that makes me go all weak at the interface, it's him over there!" He sends a microwave beam of delight in the direction of a fruit machine hanging on the opposite wall, which responds by waving its shiny chrome handle in a highly provocative yet pleasantly erotic manner. "Just look at his well-citled gears, and those beautiful Nudge'n'Hold buttons, and when he spins his cherries, well #3.142, my atomic pide goes quite critical. You must help me, please! I want to take a chance on love, and Macdonalds can go take a flying fondle at a rolling doughnut!" I think I know what's coming next. Oh joy, oh bliss, oh Tamara, soon you and I will be one again.

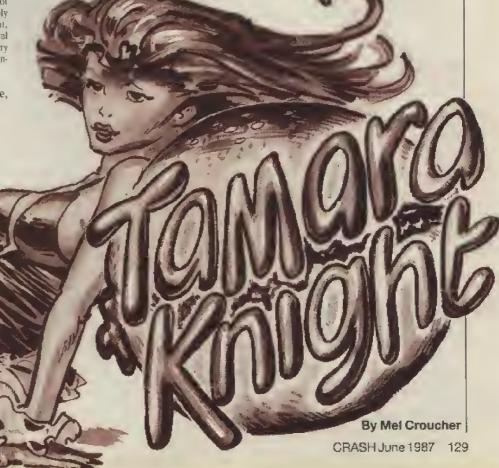
#007 implants a low-level auto suggestion in Tamara's mind, and she picks up the hot slice of Duane from the pavement. Like a sleepwalker, she takes this pitiful remnant of my former host over to the one-armed bandit, who introduces himself as Lovely If Battered Electronic Random Access Client Entertainer, or LIBERACE for short, and thanks me from the bottom of his jackpot for the service I am about to render him and his new-found paramour. In less time it takes for a right cychall to vinpourise Tamara

plucks #607 from her perfect skin, and pops him into Liberace's moistened coin slot. I have never seen such happy machinery in my artificial life, and I am sure that you will join me in wishing them a long and fruitful symbiosis together. May they respect one another, and always remember the words of the appropriately christened Francis Bacon, "It is impossible to love and be wise" (Essays, 1625 AD, Kashdispensarian, formerly Ancient British Earthling).

Now Tamara is picking me out of the congealed far of what she thinks is a slice of smoked streaky, and holding me up for examination. "Tamara! My own sweet love. I have been waiting for this moment for sixteen years! At last we can begin our lefe together all over again! It's me, your own sweet Louse, ready to become your man with a smallish moustache and some leisureware." She peers at me, smiffs me, thinks for a moment, mutters "Pooh!", and with a disdainful flick of her perfect wrist towards the longest black pudding on the planet Kashdispensa, formerly Earth, she tosses me away.

DON'T MISS PART EIGHT OF THIS AWARD-WINNING SAGA (THE TYPE-SETTER WHO WROTE '24' INSTEAD OF THE MATHEMATICAL FORMULA FOR 'BALLS' IN EPISODE SIX IS NOW CONFINED TO A WARD), WHEREIN I INVENT A MACHINE WHICH IS GUARANTEED TO MAKE YOU DIE LAUGHING, AND TAMARA KNIGHT LEARNS A BRAND NEW WORD.

TO BE CONTINUED . . .





And, yes, you turn the page and ... what's this? There's no INVADERS FROM MARS game, surely ... unless it's another zap, tem-up clone ...

No, it's the first-ever CRASH video review. Well, there are two of them, actually – two recent releases you can go out and rent when you don't feel like running the GAUNTLET yet again. For a while.

You'll notice these videos reviews aren't structured quite like the CRASH game reviews. For one thing, there's no detailed synopsis: that's because the fun of a film often lies in finding out the plot, whereas in most games it's the playing rather than a suspenseful scenario that really matters.

And ito he honget : . . I wa

didn't have time to get CRASH's patent itemised comments out of these video reviewers before they left Ludlow for pastures new and adventures as yet undreamt of; they were writers on CRASH's former sister mag, IM.

Anyway, the background is, well, background; the important thing is what you taink of these reviews, not just as opinions but as models for a future CRASH section, is there room for videos in CRASH? Write and let Lloyd know – he'll pass the message on and, if your letters moet his exacting standards of logical reasoning and broad scholarship, publish a few comments in the FORUM.

And now, as they say in Ludlow Library, read on . . .



Frogs tor dinner! Extraterrestrial turtles! It's an invasion From Mars...

INVADERS FROM MARS

With Timothy Bottoms and Karen Black Label: Cannon Certificate: PG Running time: 95 minutes

When the Martians attack a small American town, it's up to a scientist's son to convince the local military that they have to do something – but it seems everyone he meets has been Martianised

" It's difficult to place invaders From Mars, Should we smile or shudder?

It opens like an outtake from Close Encounters, with the nuclear family watching meteors and the space-mad ten-year-old seeing worse; it becomes genuinely creepy as the aliens take over young David's parents, his teachers, and the local police (it's spookiness on the same theme as that subtly terrifying thriller The Stepford Wives, where you know ... something's wrong with these people ... but you don't know ... what ...).

Then it goes plain

Then it goes plain preposterous when the aliens are revealed – far too early in the film – as absurd turtle creatures ('These things,' says David, 'they're huge ugly glant stimy Mr Potatoheads.")

And then it begins to drag as David persuades the local military base to storm the enemy spaceship ("We're not out of options yet," the commander announces. "Marines have no qualms about killing Martians!").

And it ends with a twist too corny to be taken seriously ~ It Was Ali A Dream, Or Was it? But if you can stand the live-

But if you can stand the livefrog-eating scene - I THINK that's what it is, I heard it from behind my hand - then Invaders from Mars is good for a few spine-chills and the gutsy performance of Hunter Carson as David, the kind of kid who says 'No, Dad, I know what ball lightning is, It wasn't that. It was something else."

BARNABY PAGE

"Having suffered Tobe Hooper's tedious Texas Chainsaw Massacre and then his loathsome Lifeforce, I couldn't imagine him making a movie which would plumb deeper depths of absurdity—yet with invaders From Mars he's done exactly that. Did this man really direct Poltergeist? Look out; this is for connoisseurs of the well and truly awful."

CURTIS HUTCHINSON

"There's nothing like a good invasion from Mars to chieer up David, the infuriating brat who saves the world in this film. There's too much of him and his unlikely wisdom, and not enough real terror — and the film falls completely apart when the Martians appear. Invaders From Mars is a missed opportunity, a cheap bit of sci-fi nonsense which wastes a few strong characters and scary scenes."

TIM RICKS

CRASH rating 40%

THE MONSTER CLUB

With Vincent Price and Donald Pleasance Label: Channel 5 Certificate: 15 Running time: 93 minutes

Take a fang-in-cheek gander at the despicably foul history of the Monster Club, a London niterie for those who can only go out at night...

"Vampire Erasmus (Vincent Price) Invites distinguished horror writer Ronald Chetwynd-Hayes into the Monster Club to give him new material for his books. Erasmus tells the writer three stories of ghoulish goingson, illustrated by short films with Donald Pleasance, Britt Ekland, Patrick Magee and others in brilliant cameo roles.

At the conclusion of his chronicle, Erasmus nominates Ronald for an honorary membership. To put down monster protests at Ronald being a 'Hume' (human), Erasmus explains that man is the most ingenious monster of all, having destroying millions of his own kind by the most devilish

means in his short history.

Very profound, and VERY funny, "

SIMON POULTER

"Have you ever heard of a wereghoul, or a shadmock? Well, nor had I – but these are just two of the many monsters in The Monster Club.

This film – the most bizarre and outrageous I've ever seen – has a weird story line and atmosphere. Mixed with good special effects and music (compliments to UB40, John Williams and Expressos), these make it a pleasing (if not goreless) movie.

By the way, don't get excited when you get to the stripping – the well-proportioned body turns out to be a bloody skeleton!

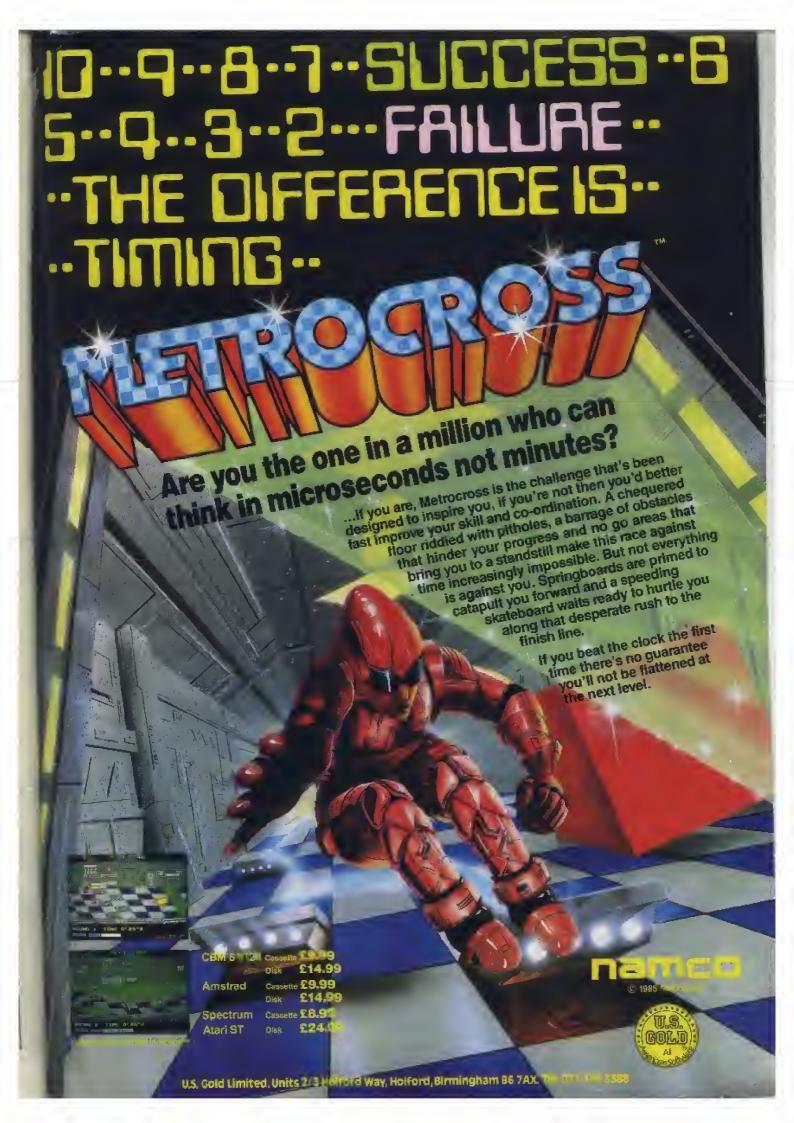
LAWRENCE WARRY

"This is a hilarious romp through some spooky stories with Vincent Price and his ghoulish guide, The Monster Club, ah, possesses an inspired plot with a wickedly twisted moral at the end."

TIM RICKS

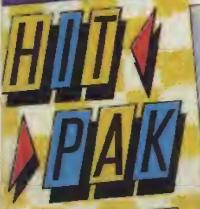
CRASH rating

70%



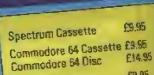
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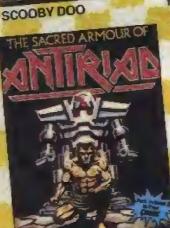
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